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ABSTRACT

To determine the nature of middle school education as it is currently practiced, researchers randomly selected 100 seventh-grade students in 100 schools in 30 states, and assigned an observer to write down each student's behavior and describe the learning environment at specified intervals during the school day of February 17, 1977. Analysis of the observations and comments made by the observers led to general conclusions in three major areas: first, the instructional program in middle schools too often is insufficiently interesting or relevant and too frequently fails to provide enough variation in the school day; second, instructional strategies and materials are undergoing modification, but more emphasis needs to be placed on the individual students' needs; and third, relationships between teachers and students were found to be good but were not translated into an education fostering independence of thought, sensitivity to learning styles, or the sharing of learning experiences by both student and teacher. The characteristics of seventh-graders and of middle schools are described in this report, six sample observers' reports are included, study results are analyzed, and the future of the middle school concept is discussed. (Author/PGD)

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THE MIDDLE SCHOOL IN PROFILE:

A DAY IN THE SEVENTH GRADE

NATIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOL ASSOCIATION
John H. Lounsbury, Jean Victoria Marani, Mary F. Compton

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Foreword

The Publications Committee of the National Middle School Association is proud to present this landmark naturalistic study of the middle school. This study provides a valuable and much needed operational picture of middle schools today, together with related materials. It also includes an informed comparison to the junior high school seen fifteen years earlier. Many readers are familiar with the similar shadow study that was published in 1964 by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development entitled, *The Junior High School We Saw: One Day in the Eighth Grade.*

This current study was conceived and organized approximately four years ago. A full description of the process is contained in the introductory chapter. The central role of John Lounsbury in this whole project deserves special recognition, however. From conception through publication he was principally responsible for organizing the project, maintaining liaison with the NMSA Board of Directors and Publications Committee, serving as one of the writers as well as editor, and, finally, overseeing the printing process.

The National Middle School Association and the education community generally are indeed grateful to the three authors and the many active participants for the efforts which culminated in this publication. We are sure that its value will be recognized by many for a long time to come.

NMSA Publications Committee (1980)

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Acknowledgements

Conducting a study of any major scope and preparing it for presentation to the public almost always involves the cooperation and assistance of many persons. This present report is certainly no exception. In fact, it epitomizes cooperation effort. The volunteer assistance of one hundred observers who gave a day of their busy lives to conduct the shadow studies which form the broad foundation of the report is highly commendable. The names of these individuals are listed in the appendix, and they should be read and noted for the Association and the profession owe them a debt of gratitude. Unfortunately, the names of two are not known. These observers received no expenses or support of any kind. Many traveled to school sites some distance from their residences. All left regular job responsibilities which subsequently had to be made-up on their own time.

Beyond this group were the members of the Teacher Analysis Panel. They assumed the task of serving as initial funnels through which the raw data were poured. As classroom teachers, their reactions were especially important. The authors of the final report relied considerably on these initial analyses, and their words are frequently used in Chapter Five. Members of this very important group, listed with their positions at the time of the study, were: (1) Candace Brickey, Language Arts Teacher, Laredo Middle School, Cherry Creek, Colorado; (2) Ginger Childs, Team Leader, Lincoln Middle School, Gainesville, Florida; (3) Lyle C. Jensen, Interdisciplinary Team Teacher, Pioneer Middle School, Yorkshire, New York, assisted by Mary Chiaravalloti, Teacher, Casey Middle School, East Amherst, New York; (4) Debbie Phillips, Language Arts Team Teacher, Worthingway Middle School, Worthington, Ohio; and (5) Larry Wiltrout, Industrial Arts Teacher, Boyce Middle School, Upper St. Clair, Pennsylvania.

Finally, the authors would like to express their sincere appreciation to the other two members of the original committee which prepared the proposal. These individuals who were instrumental in assisting during the planning and early stages of implementation of the project are Dr. Gerald Bourgeois, Superintendent, Wyoming Public Schools, Wyoming, Rhode Island and Patricia Miller, a language arts teacher from Dallas, Texas.

While this study could not and would not have been completed without the assistance of these many professional people, only the authors can be held responsible for this presentation. Whatever failings it has, including the excessively long delay in its completion, are the responsibility of the writers.

John H. Lounsbury
Jean Victoria Marani
Mary F. Compton

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About the Authors

John H. Lounsbury is Professor and Dean, School of Education, Georgia College, Milledgeville, Georgia. Lounsbury, whose doctorate is from George Peabody College for Teachers, has had a long association with intermediate education through his speaking, writing, and professional activities. Since 1976, he has served as editor of the *Middle School Journal*.

Jean V. Marani is Coordinator of the Florida Right to Read Program, Department of Education, Tallahassee. With previous experience as a junior high core teacher, a senior high social studies teacher, curriculum director, consultant, and teacher educator, Dr. Marani was a finalist in the National Teacher of the Year Award in 1962.

Mary F. Compton heads up the widely recognized middle school teacher education program at the College of Education, University of Georgia, Athens. After considerable public school teaching experience, she completed a doctorate under Dr. William Alexander at the University of Florida. Active in NMSA since its initiation, she was chosen as the Association's President-elect in the fall of 1980.

1 THE STORY OF THE STUDY

The middle school movement is in full swing. Whether viewed theoretically as an educational ideal or practically as an operational institution, there is no doubt but that the middle school has become both. The junior high school continues to exist, and probably will for many years, but the focus in both theory and practice is now clearly on the middle school. With rare exception, newly established intermediate schools are designated middle schools and they usually enroll grades 6-8. Surveys on the number of middle schools in existence have been taken periodically during the past fifteen years and remarkable increases have been reported.

The movement is further supported by a young but thriving national organization (National Middle School Association) which sponsors a major annual conference, a substantial professional journal, and twenty-one state affiliates. State departments of education have been moving rapidly to establish distinct and separate certification for the middle grades in open recognition of the fact that they are far behind the need for such certificates. Even the halls of academe have been affected as institutions of higher education scurry to develop middle school teacher education programs to match new or anticipated state regulations. Books, pamphlets, articles, and doctoral dissertations on various phases of the middle school have appeared in increasing numbers.

In view of all this, it would seem that the heyday of the middle school is here and now. But what really is the status of middle school education? Though the number of middle schools has increased dramatically from the standpoint of organization, has the "practice" of middle school education moved ahead at a reasonably comparable rate? Early studies of program characteristics indicated that middle school practice was very little or no better than the junior high school practice it sought to replace. (Gatewood, 1973 and Wiles and Thomason, 1975). If the thrust of the middle school movement was to correct the clearly unsatisfactory practices of typical junior high schools, has, then, the movement to date failed? This question has haunted educators who have genuinely sought to improve school programs at the intermediate level.

This study sought to provide a data base that would help in assessing the status of the middle school movement. Though the base is limited and the study may lack something in scientific sophistication, it is an honest attempt to depict the actual practice of middle school education, as it exists in the lives of the youngsters themselves. It is not a survey of what one would like, or the opinions of what one *thinks* is, or a compilation of programmatic structures and organizational arrangements as perceived by principals but it is a picture of what *is*, as revealed in the actual experiences of 100 seventh graders who were enrolled in 100 different middle schools in 30 different states on a particular day. Such a picture is needed for, as the late Kimball Wiles stated so succinctly, "The real curriculum is the one the pupil experiences. Actually the expectations of curriculum designers may be illusions and the teacher's guides and syllabi mere paper representations of hollow hopes. Many curriculum publications describe what *should be*. Seldom does one tell what *is*. Almost always the curriculum is portrayed in terms of the vision of the adult. Rarely does anyone even attempt to see the curriculum as it is experienced by the pupil." (Lounsbury and Marani, 1964).

This study of the curriculum as it is experienced follows the format of the earlier landmark research report, *The Junior High School We Saw: One Day in the Eighth Grade*, (Lounsbury and Marani, 1964) which reported the curriculum from the standpoint of the consumer as it existed in 1962. The procedure calls for the observation (or shadowing) of randomly selected seventh grade students during a particular school day across the country. Notation of each student's behavior and the learning environment are recorded at stated intervals by the observer. In addition, each student is interviewed briefly at the close of the school day.

While some differences in the studies exist, and are noted, there is a basis for dealing with the crucial questions, "Can any improvements in the *practice* of intermediate education be seen over a span of 15 years?" "Has the middle school movement made any difference in the educational experiences provided early adolescents?" (Tempting as it is, answers to those questions will not be given here and now, but will be dealt with in the context of the study later in the report.)

The plan for the 1977 study was formulated by a self-appointed committee which included the present authors, Dr. Gerald P. Bourgeois, Superintendent, Wyoming Public Schools, Wyoming, Rhode Island and Patricia Miller, Language arts teacher, Dallas, Texas. The committee believed that it was time to check the pulse of the movement, to get a feel for how middle school education was, in fact, being conducted at the grassroots level. The committee wondered if the beautiful, personalized philosophy of middle school education had become engrained in instructional procedures and the climate of schools. A proposal outlining the study was submitted to the Board of Directors of the NMSA. The Board's approval in September of 1976, together with that of the Publications Committee, led to further actions. The Steering Committee selected, arbitrarily, the day of Thursday, February 17 as Shadow Study day and made preparations to enlist observers at the forthcoming national conference.

One important feature of the proposed study, not found in the earlier study, was the utilization of a panel of classroom teachers. Several classroom teachers from various geographic areas were recruited to do an initial analysis of the studies. Each received a portion of the studies and reviewed them in light of identified

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characteristics. The list of characteristics of middle school education that was developed by the Committee was submitted to the NMSA Board of Trustees for validation.

At the November, 1976 Annual Conference of the National Middle School Association, held in St. Louis, the Committee set up a table near the registration area and proceeded to recruit volunteers to conduct a shadow study in their area. No standards of selection were imposed, no judgments were made concerning whether a school was "good enough" or otherwise eligible. An attempt was made, however, to entice people from different states and regions. Considerably more than a hundred volunteers signed up and were subsequently mailed materials, but, unfortunately, many were unable to complete the assignment for one reason or another. While the one hundred schools and observers that composed the final sample might not be technically classified as a random sample they were not "selected" and they probably are "representative." These schools are listed alphabetically by state, in Appendix D, while the observers are listed in Appendix E. Thirty different states, from Colorado to Connecticut, from Michigan to Florida, are represented in the sample. The observers were all professional people, primarily principals or supervisors.

As the studies were submitted they were logged in and coded. Those not responding in a reasonable time were contacted to see if a study had been completed. After all had been received they were divided up into random groups and sent to the teacher analysis panel members. The teachers ultimately submitted their reactions and analysis. Finally the writing team began work on the full study. Considerably more time than was anticipated was required for the completion of each of these steps. The entire study was conducted without any cost to the Association, however.

Further details on the procedures used in conducting the study are contained in Appendix A.

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Gatewood, Thomas E., "What Research Says About the Middle School," *Educational Leadership* (December, 1973), pp. 121-224.

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2 THE SEVENTH GRADER

The fundamental premise of middle school education is that it should be based on the nature and needs of transescents. It is appropriate, therefore, that a chapter describing seventh graders be included as a preliminary to the presentation of the shadow studies and an analysis of them. One can not reflect adequately on the happenings of one day in the seventh grade and interpret them properly except as one is conversant with the nature of seventh graders.

Describing *the* seventh grader is an impossible task for seventh graders come in many sizes and shapes, with a variety of ethnic and religious backgrounds, interests, likes and dislikes, and hopes for the future. Their stages of maturation are so varied; some are still childlike without any outward indication of the rapid physical changes which will soon transform them into true adolescents. Others already possess mature physiques and are capable of producing children. Some are weathering the maturation process with surprising ease, even dignity, while others writhe and struggle like butterflies emerging from tattered cocoons.

Seventh graders are not even the same chronological age. State attendance laws with arbitrary cut-off dates for initial school entrance, the mobility of our people, and the still not uncommon practice of retention result in a population of seventh graders most of whom are twelve or thirteen but with some who, because of superior ability, may be as young as ten or eleven, while still others may be as old as fourteen. At no other single school grade is such a range of ages likely to be found. The age differential range of the one hundred students shadowed was four years and seven days, 11 to 14.

The seventh grade, therefore, is composed of students who represent a true paradox. These youngsters are alike mainly in their unlikeness, with differences not only from one another but within themselves, often from one day to the next. It is the great variation among seventh graders which make them typical of the entire middle school and make them the most appropriate sample for a study of middle schools.

While no human being can be segmented into categories of characteristics, for purposes of discussion developmental changes will discussed in three general categories — physical, intellectual, and emotional.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

During the elementary school years boys and girls grow at about the same rate. There is very little difference between the sexes; and the rate of growth is steady and comparatively slow, though mothers trying to keep them clothed might disagree. Technically, the pituitary gland is held in check by the hypothalamus, an organ which lies posterior to it.

The growth spurt is a result of the hypothalamus releasing its control of the pituitary. The latter begins to secrete increased amounts of a hormone which stimulate the sex glands. Thus, the growth gland, the pituitary, initiates the growth spurt and the sex glands affect sexual maturation. For some youngsters the growth spurt may begin as early as nine; for others not until the fifteenth year. For even a very few others it may occur earlier or later.

The first noticeable physical change in transescents is the lengthening of the long bones of the arms and legs. Shirts and pants become too short, and the previously well-coordinated elementary youngster is likely to become the stereotype of the clumsy, awkward middle schooler. Muscular development tends to lag behind skeletal development. Therefore, the youngster may have trouble managing his new height. He may bump into furniture en route through a room. The recurring problem of spilled glasses of milk interrupting the family meal is illustrative of the problem of lengthening arms reaching for items and making contact before the youngster expects it to happen. Teachers and other adults should constantly remind themselves that although the youngster may appear to be an adult, his muscular development has not kept pace with the lengthening of his arms and legs. Expecting these youngsters to lift heavy weights or to engage in strenuous activities may actually place their physical well-being in jeopardy.

The lengthening of the long bones is followed by the broadening and expanding of the chest, the lengthening of the trunk (or sitting height), the development of boys' shoulders and girls' hips, and a deepening of the voices of both sexes (although the change is more pronounced for males).

The development of secondary sexual characteristics heralds the termination of the growth spurt, but not, of course, all growth. For girls menarche (the onset of menstruation) marks the beginning of puberty. The average age for menarche in American girls is twelve (Tanner, 1962). For boys there is less agreement, even within the medical profession, as to what single event may indicate puberty (Mitchell, 1974). Some physicians believe that it is indicated by the growth of pubic hair; others believe that the stage is marked by the first ejaculation. Still others point to the indication of spermatozoa in the urine. The average age of puberty for males, however measured, is about fourteen — which is beyond the seventh grade for most.

Frisch (1974) postulates that there is a critical body weight which must be reached before pubertal changes can occur. This has been found true in both sexes and is independent of influences such as climate, altitude, and age.

Puberty in girls involves other physical changes. The breasts enlarge and the areolas or nipples become larger and darken in color. Pigmented pubic hair appears which will eventually become kinky and coarse. Underarm hair appears and some hair may appear on the upper lip.

For boys the growth of the primary sex organs is rapid during puberty. The growth of testes and scrotum and the lengthening of the penis signal sexual maturation. The development of these organs becomes a matter of pride or ridicule during these years especially when "gang showers" are used in school. Facial hair appears first as a sort of "peach fuzz" and then as coarse whiskers. Pubic hair follows the same pattern.

Both boys and girls experience a coarsening of the skin with greater activity in the sweat glands. With sexual maturation the composition of perspiration changes, and it takes on a stronger odor.

Internal changes brought on by alterations in body chemistry may add to the youngsters' problems, and may even present dangers which must be reckoned with. The heart grows during puberty and its rate of beat slows. Consequently, there is a rise in blood pressure. The incidence of heart attacks among early adolescents, while still rather rare, has been on the increase during recent years. The commonly noted tendency of transescents to appear listless at times and over-active at others is caused by a fluctuation in basal metabolism. Frequent changes of pace for these youngsters should be the order of the day. A high relative blood sugar level on arising in the morning may cause them to reject any suggestion of breakfast. However, by the time they arrive at school, the blood sugar level may have returned to normal and the sudden need for food may be genuine and crucial. Most teachers will attest to the difficulty in holding the attention of a hungry child.

Facial changes take place, too. The forehead becomes wider and higher. The jawbone begins to grow and jut forward, which gives the early adolescent a much straighter profile. The incisors of both jaws become more upright, and the nose becomes more projecting (Tanner, 1962).

Girls on the average enter this transitional stage approximately two years earlier than boys. And it is in the seventh grade when this difference is most apparent. The range within one sex, however, is greater than between the sexes (Eichhorn, 1973). It is interesting to note that the later the growth spurt occurs, the longer the period of growth. Thus, all other factors being equal, later maturers will probably be taller as adults than will early maturers. This may be comforting to both the early maturing girl who towers over her classmates in grade seven and the late maturing boy who may be mistaken for her little brother.

EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Seventh graders, even more than most youngsters, are social beings. From their early years they have modeled the behavior of, and sought the approval of, significant others. The persons who become most significant to youngsters during the early adolescent years are other early adolescents — the peer group into which the seventh grader aspires membership. School is the place at which the youngster is able to spend the greatest amount of time with his peers. It is no wonder, then, that seventh graders are most willing to go to school — irrespective of the adequacy of the curriculum.

The influence of the peer group during the middle school years may be difficult for adults to understand and accept. A teacher may be baffled by the resistence of the above-average student to complete assigned tasks, hand in homework, or prepare for test. If the youngster seeks acceptance in a group that is composed of

"C" students, he will do little more than the work required to receive a grade of "C". If the group he likes shows little respect for teachers, he may appear uncooperative, or even belligerent, toward a teacher he may have openly admired earlier—and still does inwardly.

Youngsters learn rapidly that the most athletic boy and the prettiest girl are usually the most popular students. Intellectual superiority and co-operation count for very little. For the most part, being different from the norm is equivalent to being doomed to loneliness.

Seventh graders tend to be very critical of adults in general, and of their parents and teachers in particular. It isn't that seventh graders no longer love their parents, it is just not popular to admire and praise one's parents when talking to fellow students. There appears to be a certain significance attached to being "cool," which is aided by the opinion that one's parents are old-fashioned and lack understanding. A certain amount of conflict with parents is probably inevitable, especially in light of the ambivalence most parents seem to feel about whether a twelve-year-old should be considered an "old" child or a "young" adult. Consequently, they may treat him as if he fits the "child" category on one occasion and that of the "adult" on the other. He is too old to do some things and too young to do others. The early adolescent is often referred to as a "marginal" person — between two categories.

Seventh graders' best friends are usually of the same sex. Girls, in particular, enjoy telephone conversations of long duration with girlfriends they haven't seen for ten or fifteen minutes. Subjects range from boys to clothes to teachers. Because they mature earlier, girls are interested in boys well before boys become attracted to them. For many boys, however, the seventh grader may be a pivotal year during which they begin to notice without realizing that the sexual antagonism that manifests itself in teasing, hitting, and other kinds of annoying behavior is really due to this new interest.

When girls form groups they tend to be of short duration and to be limited in number. Boys' groups, on the other hand, are longer lived and tend to center around an activity such as model-building or football.

Seventh graders read more than do younger children. They have greater facility with reading than they have had before and there are not yet the demands on their leisure time that come during the high school years. The amount of time spent reading is usually related to intelligence level and the quality of reading material available. In the past girls have devoted more time to reading than have boys, but with the changes in sex role orientation occurring in our society this may no longer be true. Boys like to read adventure and mystery stories and science fiction. Girls enjoy realistic novels dealing with adolescent problems, romance, biographies, historical fiction, and good characterizations. Girls share boys' interest in mysteries but not their enjoyment of humorous stories.

For some inexplicable reason, many, if not most, seventh grade girls are attracted to horses. They spend an inordinate amount of time reading about them, talking about them, and/or daydreaming about them. Stories such as *Black Beauty, Smoky,* and *National Velvet* continue to be popular with seventh grade girls. Television occupies a great deal of seventh graders' time. Results of a 1974 study

(Compton, 1974) indicate that more than 50% of youngsters in the middle school spend in excess of four hours per day watching television.

Many begin discretionary television viewing with afternoon reruns from the early 1950's. For many viewing continues through the evening hours and through at least part of the late-night talk shows. Practically all of what they view is basically adult programming. Program preferences include crime dramas and situation comedies. A good many youngsters regularly view programs with a "magazine" format — such as the popular "Sixty Minutes." Analysis of these program preferences reveals a common thread in the plots — integrity. The main characters within a program can rely on one another, they keep their word, and, above all, they are fair.

The early adolescent questions the ideals and values of his parents and other adults. This is particularly true in relation to religion. If God is a just and loving being, they ask, then why is it that some kind and loving people are allowed to die while certain unkind people may live to be quite elderly. For many early adolescents a personal relationship with God may develop. This phenomenon is illustrated in Judy Blume's *Are You There, God? It's me, Margaret.* Margaret Simon, the central character of this extremely popular book, is the offspring of a Roman Catholic father and a Jewish mother. Her parents have decided to allow her to select her own religious affiliation when she is ready. Experiences with formal religion prove unsatisfactory so Margaret speaks to God as she would to a friend at night before falling asleep.

Some of the questioning of religious beliefs stems from the early adolescent's acute sense of justice. An idealistic approach to life's problems tends to oversimplify some solutions to complex problems and to identify martyrs among those whom he may usually dislike. It is not surprising that the quality most admired in seventh grade teachers is a sense of fairness.

Seventh graders tend to be egocentric. They are very aware of the development of their bodies and the comparison with others their same age. Many develop what has been called a "personal fable." This is the youngster's performing for an unseen but constantly-viewing audience. It is also related to a feeling of personal invincibility through which he may come to feel that nothing dangerous or damaging can happen to him. This may account for the great number of accidental deaths among this age group.

The physical changes experienced by the youngster, his striving to be accepted by peers, and his ambivalence toward adults and their values render him a very sensitive person. Suicide, therefore, is a major cause of death among youngsters of middle school age, and the numbers are on the increase.

INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT

Until recent years it was assumed that for persons with normal intelligence the early adolescent years witnessed a change in the mode of intellectual functioning from the concrete to the abstract. Although Piaget (1950) emphasizes that the year for the beginning of true formal operations is approximate, it has been taken literally as eleven. Textbook publishers and producers of other instructional material have been able to persuade teachers that seventh graders (by virtue of having lived for eleven years) can work with abstract concepts. Recent research by Epstein and

Toepfer (1978) indicates that 85-90% of youngsters who are twelve to fourteen years of age are in a developmental plateau of brain growth, and during this time there is a minimal, if any, growth of new brain cells. Further data give credence to the idea that by the time youngsters leave grade eight less than 20% of them have reached Piaget's level of formal operations.

A more current theory is that there are certain generic factors which influence learning (Reisman and Kauffman, 1980). With expanded research data, this theory might well replace those which rely on the concept of developmental stages.

The fact that youngsters are not all at the same level of intellectual functioning while in the middle school further complicates the role of the teacher. The range of intellectual development of youngsters is broad within the middle school — far greater than the range found in either the elementary years or those of the high school. In fact, the lower quartile are likely to end their academic preparation prior to high school matriculation. In the middle school there will not only be youngsters who have deficient skills in areas such as reading and mathematics in the same organizational component with those with superior skills, but there will be those who may be experiencing a plateau in intellectual development and those who will never reach an intellectual level at which they can deal with abstract concepts.

Teachers need diagnostic skills to determine how best to work with youngsters at whatever level they come to their classrooms. The teacher of seventh graders must be aware of what differences in intellectual development mean when translated into learning activities.

Some seventh graders will be bound, to a great extent, to activities of a concrete nature. Many youngsters will have difficulty naming ways in which objects are similar, unless these objects are physically present. Some will be able to follow a series of events to its logical consequence. Still others will be capable of reversing their thinking, altering a single event in the sequence, and determining the ultimate result. Some youngsters will be capable of elaborate explanations of events in reporting news or in creative writing efforts. Others will be bound to a mere reporting of the facts, "telegraphic" style. Some will be intrigued by questions that may be impossible to answer such as "What would happen if the Polar Ice Cap should melt?" The ability to deal with the possible is, of course, dependent upon some knowledge of the content being explored.

Many seventh graders will be bound to the "here and now." Differences in time orientation are a manifestation of cognitive development. Some students can develop long-range plans; others are bound by periods of from a day or two to a week's period. This is particularly important when contract planning is used in school. Some seventh graders may have difficulty completing a contract until the night before the due date. Time orientation should also be considered when planning social science curricula. Most seventh graders will have difficulty relating to the ancient Greeks and Romans. They have greater empathy for those who seek peace in the Middle East, those who espouse to the U.S. Presidency in the 1980's, and those who fight for human rights throughout the world. Social studies curricula should focus on the present and recent past if early adolescents are to benefit in any real sense.

By the time youngsters enter the seventh grade language development has proceeded to a point at which the vast majority of early adolescents have not only fairly large vocabularies but a variety of words and expressions appropriate for various social situations. They understand, for example, that there are certain words and sayings appropriate for the peer group but inappropriate in conversations with one's grandparents, clergy, or the principal of the school.

Boys, in particular, are adept with argot, a form of written or verbal language to be used with peers so that adults will not be able to follow the conversations ("Pig Latin' is a form of argot.) Once adults understand the specific argot it loses its effectiveness and a different system must be devised. Many early adolescents practice until they have mastered the specific argot and are able to speak rapidly and with inflection.

Early adolescents ordinarily have fairly well-developed memories. A twelve-year-old may be able to quote the position and batting average of the entire roster of the local baseball team, though unable to remember the names of the capitals of the fifty states. The early adolescent's interest in baseball players is continuing and shareable with other youngsters with the same interest. What twelve-year-old is concerned about the capitals and how many would be interested in reciting the names? He may also feel that he has easy access to this information if it is needed, so why should it be learned? (A not altogether invalid bit of logic).

"Intelligence" is a term that has been used, misused, and abused ad nauseum. Psychologists and educators appear unable to reach agreement on a definition. Unfortunately, intelligence is still often considered synonymous with I.Q. Perhaps it is easier to use a numerical figure to communicate the ability of the child to deal with cognitive materials. At any rate, teachers and parents should keep in mind that I.Q. is nothing more than a symbolic representation of a youngster's performance on a test as related to his chronological age. Quite often creative youngsters do not perform well on these tests because they like none of the answers given and mark just any response. Although there seem to be no differences in the average I.Q. for males and females, it has been established that the range among males is greater than among females.

Middle school teachers must be aware of many factors in planning learning activities. They must be aware of the variations in intellectual development among students. They must be able to determine if some students have reached a plateau in intellectual development, and they must determine which youngsters perform at specific levels in the various content areas. This responsibility must be undertaken, however, if the middle school is to function for the maximum development of early adolescents.

This brief view of seventh graders has covered their development in three broad categories — physical, emotional, and intellectual. The reader must remember that each seventh grader shadowed on February 17 was different from each other youngster, and that each experienced that school day as a total organism — neither entirely physical, emotional, or intellectual.

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3 SCHOOLS FOR THE TRANSESCENT

It would be fair to state that the middle school is itself a transescent—its childhood was the early years of emerging from the junior high school organization. Now the middle school has reached self-identity and is revealing its youthful personality. Adulthood is still a long way off, but the shape and substance of the mature being is clearly visible. Like early adolescents, middle schools come in many shapes and sizes and display all manner of behavior. In some cases the middle school is still a rather traditional junior high school; in other instances it has fashioned a fresh approach to educating youth in the middle school years. Many schools are ambivalent, without a clear focus and sense of direction.

That such a condition exists is not surprising, for the entire reorganization movement is fairly young and there have been many different and quite diverse factors underlying the development of intermediate education. This generalization applies to both the junior high school and the middle school.

A brief review of the past and the present of the reorganization movement is in order to gain perspective for the presentation of some generally advocated distinguishing characteristics of middle school education.

Although early adolescents are different from primary grade students on the one hand and full-fledged adolescents of the high school on the other hand, they have often been captives of programs based upon the characteristics of these other two age groups, particularly adolescents. There has been evident in our culture a general lack of understanding about the period of early adolescense.

The junior high school represents the earliest attempt to provide an organizational level specifically based on the unique nature of early adolescence. Unfortunately, its initial birth was largely the result of an effort to introduce secondary education earlier in the public school years. Although there have been many significant exceptions, junior high schools have never been quite able to divorce themselves from the image of the high school. The label, junior high school, was unfortunate. The school almost always adapted a senior high school type program with separate subjects broken into 45- or 50-minute segments, the trappings of graduation, and other accoutrements such as interscholastic sports, pep rallies, and proms. Little attention was given to the differences between the nature of the early adolescent struggling to escape childhood and the nature of the mid- and late-adolescent whose sights are focused on employment, further academic preparation, and even marriage.

Despite its programmatic shortcomings and failures, however, the junior high school experienced substantial growth. Administratively speaking, the organization of a junior high school was often the "best" thing to do from demographic and economy standpoints. By the 1940's the typical American school system was organized on a 6-3-3 basis, and by 1975 there were close to 8,000 such separate intermediate institutions, mainly 7-9 schools but with many 7-8 units.

Thoughtful junior high school educators had long been disturbed by the obvious failings of the institution. Concern over the appropriateness of what had come to be the typical junior high school mounted in the late fifties and early sixties but never "jelled" into a major renaissance effort.

The middle school concept was developing during the 1960's and the middle school was advanced as an alternative organizational pattern for early adolescents by William Alexander and others. The concept of the middle school seems to more clearly focus on the nature of the early adolescent, and more directly take into consideration individual differences and individual needs. It had appeal for it was a fresh approach and carried a new name. Soon a genuine movement was under way. Fed by dissatisfaction with the junior high school and a belief that young people actually matured earlier, the movement quickly enlisted many educators. The 6-8 and 5-8 grade patterns were advocated as more appropriate than the 7-9 junior high school.

When first counted on a national basis, Alexander identified 1,101 middle schools in 1967-68 (Alexander, 1968). Just two years later a comparable survey revealed 2,298 middle schools (Kealy, 1971). When Compton, using the same definition, conducted a national survey in 1974, she reported 3,723 middle schools (Compton, 1976). The most recent survey was carried out in 1976 by Brooks. The number of middle schools then exceeded 4,000 (Brooks, 1978). Current "guesstimates" place the number of middle schools in excess of 5,000.

Paralleling the growth in numbers has been a growth in supporters. Advocates of middle school education can now be found in state departments, large public school systems, independent schools, colleges of education, in foreign countries, in PTA's, and most importantly, in school faculties. There seems to be developing a movement of sufficient size and stature to succeed in making basic changes in the nature of American intermediate education which the junior high school was unable to do.

The schools in the sample reported on in this study were generally "new" schools, that is they had been organized in recent years. Almost half of the schools had been organized three years or less at the time of the study. On the other hand, only twelve schools had been organized ten years or more.

The organizational patterns of the Shadow Study schools were heavily weighted toward 6-8 with almost two-thirds reporting this arrangement. Thirteen per cent of the schools were 7-8 and twelve per cent were 5-8 schools.

DISTINGUISHED CHARACTERISTICS OF MIDDLE SCHOOL EDUCATION

Behind status figures and general concepts are program characteristics that more nearly tell what the nature of schools for transescents should be like from an operational and instructional standpoint. These desired characteristics can be gleaned from the literature - and we have done that in combination with our own experiences - as a way of developing a "yardstick" against which some interpretive judgments can be made. These characteristics were not given to the observers, for their task was simply to record what actually occurred to real seventh graders. They were given to the teacher analysts, however, so that there might be a common way of reflecting and commenting on the individual studies.

In the remainder of this chapter some distinguishing characteristics of middle school education are delineated and described. They were developed for the purpose of this study. The summary listing of the general characteristics and indicators at the end of the chapter is the statement sent to the teacher analysts.

Instructional Program

Obviously, the needs of early adolescents should be considered in developing the middle school instructional program. These needs are further modified to be consistent with the values, objectives, and needs of the society within which the school exists.

The community should be considered a major resource to enrich the instructional program. Involvement should not only include typical activities such as field trips and parent-teacher groups but should provide for lay participation in programs in the school and in community based instructional programs. Examples of the latter include involvement of students as helpers in the local hospital and as participants in nursing home activities, both of which aid youngsters in understanding the interdependency of various facets of community life.

Skill development does not end with the elementary years, even for the more successful student. Early adolescents represent a wide range of skill development; some are voracious readers with an insatiable appetite for all types of reading materials; others struggle with only the most basic materials. Some transescents are adept with mathematics and enjoy the challenge of an innovative instructional program which may include fairly sophisticated programming of micro-computers; others approach even the simplest computations with fear and trembling. Of course, the great majority of seventh graders fall somewhere on the scale between the two extremes in mathematics and reading. All, however, should be provided appropriate experiences to develop and refine these skills. In addition, middle schools recognize that other skills such as listening, interviewing, interpreting, writing, and speaking are equally necessary parts of the instructional program.

A major component of the program of many junior high schools was the provision of exploratory experiences. However, in many schools the range of choices was limited and/or designated as more appropriate to either boys or girls. Consequently, girls were often limited to choices of home economics or art while boys selected from industrial arts, mechanical drawing, or art. Today's schools, in mirroring our modern society, recognize the need for a wide range of options available to both sexes. They also embrace the concept of exploration as a sampling of many options in order that the individual may make more intelligent choices for future electives or personal educational pursuits. These choices may include experiences such as personal typing, home living, industrial arts, art, foreign languages, dramatics, and music.

Perhaps the curricular area most vital to the developmental needs of early adolescence is that of health education. At no other period of human development is the student more aware of his or her own body, the rapid changes it is undergoing, and the problems of managing it. A health education component with its own identity rather than a rainy-day activity in physical education or as a unit in science is clearly recognized as a must for a good middle school.

Physical education should be required throughout the middle school. It should include the development of skills in a variety of lifetime sports such as tennis, bowling, golf, and swimming rather than being limited to seasonal team sports — i.e., football in autumn, basketball in winter, and baseball in the spring. A program of intramurals should be developed through which all youngsters may have and opportunity to participate. Wide participation in intramural activites is more likely to result if these are scheduled during the regular school day. Physical education is another curricular area in which skill development should be the major focus. Classes in this component should be no larger than in the other skills areas such as mathematics and language. Serious consideration should be given to grouping based on youngsters' developmental levels rather than grade designation or chronological age.

The problems of moving from childhood to adolescence provide not only interesting but essential curricular topics. Some of these concerns may be handled through the focus on the individual and his changes in the health education component. Still others may be addressed through advisor/advisee counseling sessions, through the use of realistic fiction books written for or about early adolescents, or through a contemporary social studies program. Middle school youngsters are keenly interested in themselves and their relationships with peers as well as adults, and even in the world at large.

Instructional Strategies

Although the general program of the middle school may appear to be designed for early adolescents, the activities conducted within the classroom are the major indicators that a school truly embraces the middle school concept. The wide range of abilities, interests, and needs found in any middle school classroom requires that the teacher employ a broad repertoire of instructional strategies. Teaching in a middle school also calls for a keen sensitivity to both verbal and non-verbal cues which may indicate that youngsters are experiencing difficulty in learning. The teacher must then be able to select and utilize different modes of teaching when particular students require them.

Along with a wide range of instructional strategies, extensive and varied materials should be employed, some commercially produced, others teacher-made, and still others made by the students themselves. Classroom sets of a single textbook are seldom needed at the middle school level. Instead, copies of textbooks can be distributed among several classrooms with the result that each instructional unit may have a variety of textbooks designed for different levels. Learning activities packages (LAPs), mini-courses, learning centers, and other activities can provide diverse experiences toward the same goals — learning of specific concepts or the development of specific skills. Varied instructional media are now available on several levels and may be utilizied for self-instruction as well as for group activities.

The nature of the middle school student necessitates an instructional approach which leads to personalized assignments and activities. There may be times when the student needs to work alone — whether the activity be developmental or remedial. At other times the activity may lend itself to working in groups of two, three, or four. In still other instances the optimal group may be as large as 150 students. Grouping for this age group must include those based on cognitive levels in addition to those determined by similar interests, needs or even on friendship.

Many middle schools recognize that organizing the instructional day into large blocks of time makes possible the integration of content areas. Educators who recognize that early adolescents may not be capable of seeing relationships among the various content fields agree that a curriculum based on a broad-fields or an interdisciplinary approach may be the most appropriate for this age group. A unified approach allows for integration of content and demonstrates the interrelatedness of the various fields. Most topics of interest to middle school youngsters cut across two or more subject fields. Examples might be America's dependency on the automobile and petroleum products; recreational activities in early and modern America; or the United States as a cultural "melting pot."

Teaching in an integrated program for active early adolescents should be more nondirective and action-oriented than in schools for younger children. The diversity of student interests and needs at the middle school level also demands that many topics be student-generated as well as student-implemented.

Relationships With Adults and Other Students

The relationship of adults and students in the middle school is best characterized as advisor-advisee rather than the parental posture often appropriate for teachers of the elementary grades or the more random relationship of senior high school students and their teachers. Although the early adolescent may begin to view adults in a different light than he did as a younger child, it is imperative that there be at least one adult in the school to whom the youngster can turn when he encounters personal or academic problems. At times guidance will be on an individual basis; at others, students will be counseled in groups. The advisory role may be performed by members of an academic team or by other personnel within the school setting.

As a very social being, the transescent is concerned about membership in and exceptance by a specific group of his peers and, once included, his strives to maintain his status. Physical and emotional changes experienced during these years may cause the youngster to feel inadequate and social situations. If the school is to meet the needs of youngsters during the "transescent" years, there must be opportunities for socialization, for interaction, and for shared interests. Activities should be provided which will aid transescents to be more at ease and social situations.

The most important factor in the provision of a program appropriate for middle school students is the faculty of the school. Transescents are entitled to the opportunity to work with teachers who understand them, who like them and want to be with them, and who are knowledgeable about not only the specific content fields they are assigned to teach, but about the learning process as well. Possessing the depth of content required for senior high school teaching is not sufficient for the teacher of the middle school years. The ultimate success of youngsters during these years of schooling, as well as in future actitivies, may very well depend on the quality of interaction with teachers. An environment in which there is open and positive feedback between teacher and student, based on mutual respect, cannot help but aid the youngster in the development of a more positive self concept. If nothing else of a positive nature results from these years than the shaping of a healthy self concept on the part of the youngsters, then the program of the school may be regarded as an unqualified success.

Summary

An effective middle school will be characterized by many observable conditions. These distinguishing characteristics together with more specific indicators, are set forth below.

A. An INSTRUCTIONAL *PROGRAM* responsive to the values, objectives and needs of society as well as the needs of young adolescents

Indicators - the community is viewed as a resource and site for educational experiences.

a comprehensive, developmental skill program is provided for each pupil.

a full program of exploratory and enrichment experiences stressing diversity, career awareness, individual selection, and aesthetics is provided for all pupils.

a program of health and physical education is available that includes instruction in relevant health concerns, intramurals and individualized physical development activities.

The personal-social concerns of early adolescents are clearly evident in the curriculum structure and content.

B. INSTRUCTIONAL *STRATEGIES* AND *MATERIALS* individualized and personalized for each student's needs

Indicators - a variety of instructional techniques are employed to meet varied needs and learning styles of emerging adolescents.

varied instructional materials are utilized to accommodate range of learning needs.

individualization of instruction is evident in assignments, activities, procedures, and size of groups.

block scheduling, team-teaching, or core program arrangements exist which provides instruction in basic areas on a resource, non-discrete content base.

teaching is action oriented, manipulative, student generated in a non-didactic mode.

C. *RELATIONSHIP INTERACTIONS* designed to strengthen the adolescent's social and self-awareness

Indicators - an advisor-advisee relationship created by a functional home-base or group guidance arrangement which insures each pupil of having a knowing, supportive adult readily available.

social experiences and socialization processes are emphasized in the program of studies and activities.

the student-faculty relationship is open, positive, and based on mutual respect.

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4 THE DAY'S RECORD: SIX SLICES OF LIFE

February 17, 1977 dawned bleak and cold over most of North America. In Pittsburgh and Minneapolis the temperature plummetted to 1°. A low of 4° was recorded in Columbus, Ohio, while New York held to 17°. In Miami Beach the temperature dropped to a record low of 42° and left the tourists shivering. Yet, in contrast, sunbathers were out in Reno, Nevada where the thermometer topped 80°. It was partly cloudy and 32° in Washington, D.C. as President Carter created a new twenty member Mental Health Commission with Mrs. Rosalynn Carter as the Honorary Chairman.

More than five million seventh graders attended school in America that day. They assembled in homerooms, banged their locker doors, nudged their friends in the hall, slouched in their seats, ran, talked, laughed, feverishly copied neglected homework, worried, combed their hair, and, for the most part, evidenced their enjoyment of the process of growing up and going to school.

For one hundred of this vast army scattered throughout thirty states, February 17 was presumably a typical day, but unbeknownst to them, they constituted our "sample". Their activities on that school day were observed and recorded.

Reading the entire set of Shadow Studies permits one to visit one hundred schools vicariously and "look in" on some six hundred classrooms. The individual studies are rich in detail which reflect the ebb and flow of the seventh grader's day. The authors have had the privilege of reviewing the entire set of studies. Our conclusions are based on the cumulative impressions derived. Likewise, members of the Teacher Analysis Panel each read a group of approximately twenty studies. Some biases and personal prejudices may, of course, be unintentionally incorporated in the analyses by the panel and the authors, though all have worked conscientiously to avoid such. This chapter will provide readers with a small sample of the raw data, just as it came to us. By perusing these entire studies, readers can draw their own conclusions and make their own generalizations. We covet for you this privilege.

The six studies presented are representative of the larger corpus of data with which the writers and the teacher analysts have worked. The studies, presented in full, have been altered only to eliminate the possibility of identifying the actual location, individual observer, or student observed.

Several criteria were used to make the final selection of the shadow studies to be incorporated in this publication. Although writing excellence of the observer was not a basic criterion, it is obvious that reports of sensitivity and clarity were chosen. The first criterion was to achieve representation—reports that reflected or typified a dozen or more similar accounts. Other criteria attempted representations of a less subtle quality and included geographic distributions, enrollment variations, and different organizational patterns.

So enter the world of the transescent through the recordings of six perceptive observers who spent a real school day with six individual early adolescents.

SHADOW STUDY NUMBER 1

A three year middle school, suburban area, modern building, enrollment of 1200.

TIME	BEHAVIOR	ENVIRONMENT
9:00	J. leaning back in chair, talking quietly to neighbor. Dressed in jeans and jacket, glasses, auburn hair, fairly tall, a bit heavy.	Period officially starts at 9:00. Kids around much earlier enjoying social time. I'm in a pod - 3 teachers in large area, basically divided into 3 class groupings. Modern, attractive, lots of evidences of pupil projects, bulletin boards, posters, etc. - a "lived-in" look more obvious than an ordered look.
9:10	J. listening to two students making an announcement regarding heart fund bowling tournament (J. is one of about 6 in her group not buying a lunch.)	There are 110 seventh graders in the pod. While there is considerable freedom and some movement including quiet conversation there is no "noise," most are in seats organizing books for the day.
9:20	Seated at a table with six other girls looking at the board.	This is a math class which is grouped generally by ability and includes some from another pod. Large class (40 +) held in 7th grade Commons area. The topic deals with finding the area of a rectangle and a parallelogram.
9:30	Working quietly finishing seat work assigned.	Another group of students, approximately 10, are working in another part of the Commons under the direction of a teacher - apparently a low achieving math group.
9:40	Looking at board and copying formula for determing volume that had been placed at board.	Homework assignment has been given and is being started in class.
9:50	Working problems from book at table as are others.	Quiet atmosphere, most everybody working, almost no talking - problems have to do with cubic feet.
10:00	Head down, pencil - and eraser in motion (10:04 - hot, took jacket off)	Class had resumed work following a general review by teacher of material she felt needed clarification.

10:10	J. seemed to be winding up the written work which, if not done, becomes homework.	Class ending, papers being turned in.
10:10	J. is writing in notebook as everyone settles down to work following written direction on board - with oral supplement.	Back in 7A Pod. (Will be here until 2:00 PM) One-third went to hall where science work was headquartered, one-third is having a spelling lesson. J.'s third is in language arts area where each student is working on his or her English notebook. The topic - irregular verbs. Teacher moving among the 31 students helping individuals.
10:30	J. is working industriously.	List of "Super Spellers" on board - about 10 names on list, 95 and up.
10:40	Still working quietly.	Teacher often touches as she moves about. Students get up at will to secure reference book or dictionary when needed - no problem.
10:50	Talked briefly with teacher then back to work.	
11:00	en route to Media Center	The media specialist, at request of teacher, had prepared a special lesson or project on Comparison and Contrast.
11:05	Listening to Media Specialist describe project.	Group meeting in a comfortable alcove area with upholstered chairs - feet up, relaxed but attentive.
11:15	Still listening attentively.	Media specialist giving examples and referring to mini-unit study guide which had been distributed. (Principal stopped by and sat with the group a few minutes.)
11:25	Looking in shelves at books.	Class moving about trying to make selection of books.
11:35	J. seated with feet up reading and reviewing the three books she had brought from shelves as tentative selections.	Most of the group have now made a selection and are scanning books.
11:45	Reading intently.	Most reading, some quietly talking about books with neighbors - teachers and media specialist moving about.
11:55	Reading - brief comment to girl friend.	Period about over.
12:05	Going to lunch.	Lunch is served in Commons area using portable equipment, disposable utensils, and compactor. A pleasant atmosphere, no long line or high noise level. Teachers generally eating with pupils. Youngsters are seated in assigned groups (part of a plan to mix folks and reduce cliques).
12:25	In motion as she and others are getting into their science class groups.	Class is organized into 5 groups (digestive, circulatory, excretory, respiratory, and nutritional). Three groups are meeting on floor in large hall, two in pod areas.
12:35	J. and her group (3 boys and 3 girls) are working independently at table in pod area.	Groups are using prepared study guides, transparencies and books. (One group is highly involved in pricking fingers and typing blood).
12:45	J. and her group working, some dialogue among them.	

12:55	J. and most of her group got up and went over to the blood typing experiment but soon returned to their station.	Groups working at varying rates of intensity.
1:05	J., still with pen in hand, talks with teacher as her group discusses the bulletin board they are planning on digestion.	
1:15	Listening "loosely".	The large group has moved into the social studies area of the pod where the teacher is giving directions about the day's work. Class is organized into teams and study stations (these groups or teams are made up of different students than were in the science groups.) The social studies activity is a mini-unit on "Technology as applied in Ancient Egypt." Many materials are being used including, but not limited to, a textbook.
1:25	Writing in notebook - at table with five other girls.	
1:35	In conversation with others at table, apparently regarding the work at the station.	
1:45	J. continuing work in notebook though glancing up now and then.	Teacher is talking to several groups about plans for tomorrow.
1:55	J. still working (though nearly everyone else has quit and are getting ready for next class.)	
2:05	J. in locker room dressing out (she soon appeared in jean shorts, t-shirt, knee socks - which was "standard.")	The 7A pod has moved into Unified Arts and Physical Education period. The 3 7A teachers now have the remainder of their day for planning and conferences.
2:15	J. and her groups are assembled in hall area listening to physical education teacher cautioning about safety - preparatory to going into gym.	Teacher is a young man dressed in colorful warm-up suit. Class is coed and has already been organized into groups.
2:25	J. is on rings - briefly.	Each group has about 6 minutes at one station. On whistle signal groups rotate.
2:35	Standing at peg board watching (had been to rope climb and had a turn there).	Stations for J.'s group were: trampoline, rings, rope climb, horses, parallel bars - other classes also in gym working on balance beam, mats, etc. Two other teachers and a student teacher also in large attractive gym.
2:45	In girls locker room.	
2:55	Sitting on stage in Little Theatre listening to drama teacher "set the stage" for the rehearsal - she is in 1st scene.	About 22 kids are in this drama group which is rehearsing the play they will put on for other students in a couple of weeks - a melodrama - J. had a relatively bit part.
3:05	Sitting down front watching other actors on stage (scene had changed).	
3:15	Same as above.	
3:25	Talking to me (at my request, since buses leave right after school).	
3:35	Returning to Pod.	

Interview with J.

J. was very glad to talk with me. She had been aware of my presence but did not realize I had been keeping up with her so closely.

Her first response to the question of what she liked and would tell a new friend about her school was, "the open classrooms." She followed that with "physical education," "unified arts," and "everything."

When asked what she would change she didn't know of a thing; when pushed to respond she finally said a "selection at lunch." (They now have just one meal, no choice.)

A girl friend joined our conversation and both continued positive. When asked if they had a personal problem was there anyone they would readily go to, each responded with a 7A Pod teacher's name and the name of the grade counselor. When I prompted them about whether or not their teachers gave them "a hard time," one said, and other agreed, "The boys hassle us, but the teachers are O.K." A positive comment about the media center also came out in the conversation.

All in all, it seems clear that J. was very satisfied with her school and had considerable pride in it.

Reflections After A Day In The Seventh Grade

It was a pleasant day for me and, I believe, for the 7th grader I shadowed. I could not help but be impressed by the almost total absence of tension - of cat and mouse - of hassle and yelling - that often characterizes so much of education these days. In this middle school seventh graders could be just that - neither quiet, self-directed scholars nor incapable and dependent children, but the active, curious early adolescents that they are. Their social needs were easily accommodated in the group activities. Also impressive was the absence of boredom so frequently displayed on the faces and in the posture of youth as typical teachers talk, talk, talk.

The particular seventh grader I observed was an unusually industrious and conscientious student. She was most often found with a moving pen in hand - notebook, book, and mind all open. She talked with peers occasionally but relatively little. She wasted very little time, generally others conversed more and engaged in more of those time consuming activities such as sharpening pencils and combing hair which characterize this age group. These seventh graders had considerable freedom, but they did not abuse it. They were surprisingly self-directed. There was a heavy reliance on individual and group work as techniques rather than the more common total class work and teacher talk.

The emotional weather they operated in throughout the day was certainly "fair and warm." Teachers were accessible and pleasant. The physical environment, likewise, though very much "lived-in" with examples of student involvement and activity abounding, was pleasant. The building itself, designed and constructed as a middle school, is almost utopian.

I would hope that this middle school was typical, but it probably isn't. But it *is*, and that is significant.

SHADOW STUDY NUMBER 2

A three year parochial middle school located in an urban area with an enrollment of 206 students.

TIME	BEHAVIOR	ENVIRONMENT
8:10 Homeroom	Jim is writing a paper on Confirmation.	Chairs arranged in groups - Teacher at desk at side of room. Directions are being given for day.
8:15 Music	Jim dropped off books in Language Arts room and proceeded to Music Class. He is listening attentively to teacher.	Teacher is showing students how to clap rhythm. She is very dynamic and has all students' interest and attention.
8:25	Same as above - attentive!	Same as above
8:35	Jim is enthusiastically singing the school song.	General involvement of total group in singing.
8:45 Lang. Arts	Jim is copying assignment or directions from blackboard.	Teacher is writing on board and explaining work to students.
8:55	Jim has followed instructions as written. He passed out some "pacs" for teacher.	Teacher is passing out pacs of work, there is general discussions among the students.
9:15	Jim is busily working on required pac and in workbook. He walked to the dictionary shelf to look up a word.	Teacher is sitting at desk at side of room working with one student. Most students are involved in writing. There is some noise as students talk with each other and discuss their work. They move about freely.
9:25	Jim is working at side of teacher's desk. He is writing and asking her questions.	General movement, discussion and working in room.
9:35	Jim is reading at his desk. He looked at me a few times and smiled as we were friends for the past wo years.	Teacher is talking with small group of students.
9:45 Math & Rel.	Jim pass out individualized Math folders. He is studiously working. There is a pleasant, purposive manner about him and he seems totally interested in what he is doing.	There are some girls at choir, the teacher has called for a small group with which she is working. Other students are quietly working on various math assignments. Three boys just came in from a reading class.
9:55 Math & Rel.	Jim was using an answer key to check some problems.	Teacher is working with another group of students. Others are still working. They are free to move about for materials. There is definite spirit of interest and direction on part of students. There is no talking here as they are all doing different things. Two girls are sitting at the same table with me but haven't looked at me once.
10:05	Jim is still busily involved.	Another small group is working with the teacher at the blackboard. She is checking to see if they are having any difficulties and they are free about asking questions.
10:15	Jim asked for help as teacher dismissed small group. He is now working a problem on the board for her to check. She is working with him on finding the area of a rectangle.	Teacher is still working with a small group and they are enjoying it. She just dismissed them and called for Jim.
10:25	Jim is back at his seat. He seems to be studying how to work a page and looks puzzled.	The teacher is helping individual students who have questions. They just move up as one child leaves her desk.

10:35	Jim just walked back my way, smiled at me and got a ruler from a drawer of math equipment.	The teacher has been kept busy with students seeking assistance.
10:45	Jim has one elbow on his desk and is resting his head on one fist listening to the teacher explain Lenten resolutions.	All students are listening to the teacher who is talking about Lent and the new rite of reconciliation. About six choir girls just walked in. General attention is evident.
10:55	Jim just answered a question about why people on opposite teams might shake hands.	Most students are attentive and listening to the teacher who is doing most of the talking at this point.
11:10 Homeroom		
11:15 Lunch	Jim is enjoying chicken & noodles, peas, jello and butter and bread. He is sitting with a group of six boys.	Students appear to be enjoying the lunch break which is a very short break as they have only 15 minutes to eat. I don't know when they use the lavatories. I had to run there before I followed Jim over to the cafeteria.
11:25 In transit	Would you believe it? While I was writing in the second part, Jim left so now I am out on the playground with the kids waiting for the bell to ring.	Most of the students are happy looking and are wearing blue buttons with "I'm from ______" printed on them. I think this is in honor of Catholic Schools seek.
11:35 Science & S. S.	Jim is sitting with his science project in front of him on the desk listening to two girls explain their projects.	This is the first traditionally arranged classroom with the desks in rows. The students are interested in the demonstration about eyes. Some questions are being asked, e.g. "What happens when the optic nerve is destroyed?" "How does the image pass through the eye to the brain?"
11:45	Jim is sitting up straight listening to the reports.	Two cute boys are giving their report on tornadoes and again some good questions are being asked.
11:55	Jim looks at his poster now, then - obviously in anticipation of giving his report.	Report on "Dreams" now. Excellent questions and obvious interest.
12:05	Jim is all attention and interest.	We are now involved in "Finger Prints". Students are really interested and asking great questions.
12:15	Same as above	Report is being given on Diabetes. "What happens if you take too much insulin?" "Is there a special diet for a person with diabetes?" "What are the symptoms of diabetes?"
12:25	Same as above	We are listening and involved in a discussion about "Lungs". I am literally amazed at the type of questions which are asked in this group. Almost all students have asked questions and have listened.
12:35 Gym	Jim was telling me about the tourney but I had to start writing. We are pulling in to the school - (3 min. trip) (I find the writing awfully hard because I want to be involved and talking with the kids.)	We are on a bus to the gym. The girls have gone to Art. This group of boys make up half of the seventh grade class of boys. Boys changed in 2 min. and are ready for the class. Gym teacher drives bus here. I am in the middle of bouncing and flying balls but the kids are really enjoying this. The teacher is lining the boys up for calisthenics.

12:45 Gym	Jim is doing the exercises very well.	There is a nice free atmosphere and respect for teacher - a woman!
12:55	Jim is serving ball for new game called Vobaki which is a combination of volley ball, basketball, and kickball. (I just noticed that Jim is the only black boy in this group.) He is showing a lot of leadership and initiative in the game.	Boys are really enthusiastic and involved.
1:05	Same as above	Game still in progress.
1:20		Boys are getting dressed again for trip back to Middle School. Students are getting settled from the gym class and art class.
1:30 Back to Science & S.S.	Jim seems happy and contented as he listens to another report - this time about teeth.	
1:50	Same as above	Students are still showing interest in the reports. I am amazed because I am so tired and yet they seem to have so much energy yet. They are still spilling out challenging questions to the reporters. However, I sense more restlessness than in the earlier period.
2:00	Same as above	Same as above
2:10	Jim is giving his report now on "How Air Makes Things Go". He appears to be a little nervous but is doing a good job in answering questions.	
2:20 Bell is ringing	I don't know Jim's reaction but that is a welcome sound. I am worn out!	

Interview:

Question A:	What would you tell a new friend about your school?
Answer:	"It's a friendly school to go to because its small enough that you can have friends in all three grades. It has the facilities needed for a good education. It has a good athletic program. I enjoy the classes. I feel that the one year is equivalent to more than 2 or 3 years back in Elementary as far as what I have learned. I seem to be getting better."
Question B:	If you could change anything about your school, what would it be, and how would you change it?
Answer:	"I would like to have the gym here but I don't know how to change that."

SHADOW STUDY NUMBER 3

A three year middle school in a large city with an enrollment of 1200 students.

TIME	BEHAVIOR	ENVIRONMENT
8:25 Science	Ann sat down by herself at a sewing machine. The teacher reminded her about a make-up test she had to take. She remarked, "Oh no, I forgot to study."	An unusual science class which takes place in the home economics room. One teacher and 26 students. The students are arranged around tables and sewing machines. The classroom has a brown chalkboard. Posters, pictures and charts decorate the room.
8:35	Ann is busily studying for her test, but she looks up occasionally to listen to announcements. She taps her pencil and fidgets in her chair.	The teacher gives the activity schedule and some announcements. Then she describes what they will be doing today in science.
8:45	Ann is paying close attention while she and the rest of the class check a paper they did a couple of days ago.	The teacher is giving the answers and calling on students to give answers to the questions they are checking.
8:55	A film is being set up and Ann is tapping her pencil on her desk, while she looks over some papers (studying for the test). She is cramming and occasionally says something to the girl next to her.	There is a film being set up by the teacher. There is some quiet talking going on in the room.
9:05	Ann is watching the movie very intently.	The movie is on the sea.
9:15	Ann is still very involved in the movie, sitting up very straight. (She never took the test.)	The movie is still in process.
9:25 Reading	Ann scared me with a fake spider as I walked into the room, we both laughed. She sat down on the side of the room, next to another girl. She says out loud to the teacher, "Hey, ______, you wanta see something funny, look in the mirror." The class laughs.	The classroom is traditionally arranged with desks in rows. There are 26 students and one teacher. There is an assignment on the board write a 200 word essay on one of four topics.
9:35 Reading	Ann is very involved with her writing, but yells out, "______, how do you spell grouch?" There is some discussion and the teacher hands her a dictionary. She says, "I hate dictionaries".	There is a high noise level in this room. Much talking between kids and kids and and kids and the teacher. A lot of teasing and threatening remarks. The teacher remains most of the time at a table, checking papers.
9:45	Ann says something to her neighbor, pointing to her essay. She begins writing again with her head down on her desk, stops, counts her words, and continues.	There is a lot of commotion going on.
9:55	Ann has completed one page and is looking around. She adds to some of the teasing going on, yells something to one of the boys, then goes back to writing.	There is still a great deal of talking, some students have written nothing.
10:05	Ann is now reading her neighbor's essay out loud.	
10:15	She has finished her essay and is handing it in. She gathers her books together and walks out by herself.	The bell rings, class is over.
10:25 Math	The child is sitting at a table with 3 other students. She is checking through some papers, writing something on them and keeps looking up and around - she appears confused.	This is a team teaching situation with two teachers and 56 students (7th and 8th graders). This is an individualized approach where students are in groups and work on different activities. The room is decorated with posters and charts and students' work.

10:35	Ann is playing with some sort of lipstick. She has her back turned to the teacher and is applying the lipstick very secretively.	
10:45	Ann is taking a test and is now sitting at a desk. She is very involved and not at all distracted. She suddenly turns her paper over and raises her hand.	All the students are taking a test. The room is very quiet.
10:55	The youngster has finished her test, and the teacher hands her a packet. She is looking through it, writing some things down and is very quiet. She is not smiling.	
11:05 Math	Ann calls out, "But how do we write it down". There is no answer. "May we go?"	The test is over. Students are moving around, involved in some sort of activity.
11:15 Language Arts	Ann sharpens her pencil and goes back to her seat, saying nothing. The teacher hands her a test.	The class is traditionally arranged with desks in rows. There are 29 students and one teacher. She is giving them a test on a chapter in the book they are reading, *West Side Story*. The class is very quiet.
11:25	The child is scratching her head and fooling with her hair. She puts her head down on the desk and continues writing. She does not look up, or around the room.	The teacher is sitting on a window ledge above where Ann is sitting.
11:35	Ann has finished her test and is now reading in West Side Story. She is chewing on one of her fingers, occasionally glancing out the window.	The room is exceptionally quiet. The teacher is now at her desk checking papers.
11:45	Ann is now reading a magazine, thumbing through looking at the pictures. She gets up and trades magazines. She is a little wiggly in her chair.	
11:55	Ann is now on the other side of the room talking to another girl. They are speaking very quietly, playing some sort of pencil game. The girl leaves the room and Ann turns around and plays the pencil game with the boy behind her. They laugh out loud. The teacher tells them that is enough.	
12:20 Lunch Recess	Ann is walking around the playground by herself. She stops, says a few words to a couple of girls, and then walks on by herself.	This is a free time after lunch, most of the kids just wander around the school grounds.
12:25	Ann walks over to the front of a building that has poles for railings. She swings around on the poles. She is by herself. She sits on the pole and starts putting on some hand lotion. Two girls walk by and come over to her. The three of them sit on the railing and are talking.	
12:35 Lunch Break	Ann is in the hallway with some other children. They are laughing and talking with one of the men PE teachers.	
12:45 Area Studies	As Ann walks into the room she says hello to me. She tells the other kids that I am an observer (although no one seems to know what that is). She walks over to an en-	This is a traditionally arranged room with the desks in rows. There are 25 7th graders and a substitute teacher. Ann has been sitting in an isolation booth, a small

	closed box in the corner of the room and sits down. She asks the substitute if she can sit with the other kids so she can see the boards. The substitute says yes. There is an uproar from some of the boys. They said, "that girl talks too much".	enclosed cubicle in the corner next to the teacher's desk. This is some sort of punishment. The child cannot see the chalkboards and the assignment for the day is to copy 4 chalkboards worth of material.
12:55	The child is quietly copying the material from the board. She continually pushes the hair out of her eyes.	The substitute walks around the room, occasionally yelling at a couple of kids to get to work.
1:05	The child is still writing, working very quietly. She is distracted by the girl sitting 2 seats away. They make faces at each other, then go back to work.	
1:15	Ann has turned her desk around to face the 2 back blackboards. She is still writing and pushing the hair out of her eyes. She has completed 2 full pages.	
1:25	Ann has a magazine and is talking with 2 other students about the pictures. She gives the magazine back to the boy, and continues writing. The teacher asks if everyone is finished. Ann says out loud, No, I'm on number 4. The teacher says for her to go ahead and finish while she shows a filmstrip. Ann yells, OK.	The substitute shows a filmstrip on Australia. No one is paying much attention, but they are taking turns reading the captions.
1:35	Class is almost over, and the kids are getting ready to leave. Ann clowns around in the front of the room and draws on the chalkboard. She yells something as the bell rings, and she walks out of the room.	
1:40 Home Ec.	As Ann enters the home economics room, she heads right for the corner where there is some of that plastic packing stuff with air bubbles. She is actively popping the bubbles. The teacher tells her to sit down. She does so, jumping into her chair.	A traditional home ec sewing room this is the same room where Ann has science. The teacher is also the same.
1:45	The child reads out loud a list from a hand out. She does so very well and enthusiastically.	The teacher hands out two papers to each child. There are about 18 girls in the room.
1:55	Ann gets out a piece of paper and then jumps up to sharpen her pencil. She sits back down and starts copying the questions from the board.	The teacher assigns 6 questions to answer from the board. The youngsters are to copy the questions and then write the answers.
2:05	Ann is busily working on the questions and answers. She understands the work. She is very fidgety in her chair.	The teacher left the room for about 5 minutes.
2:45	Ann is playing with a nutrient calculator. All of the students are involved in this activity. Ann asked the teacher, "If we get our work done early and if we have some time left near the end of school can we make some real things?" The teacher answered that they may have some time the last two weeks to do some projects. Ann said, "Oh good, I wanta make a shirt."	

Reactions to the Shadow Study Day

My appearances in the shadowed student's classes were a point of curiosity, but brushed off by the comment that I was an observer. During the day, I was mistaken for a teacher, a student teacher, a substitute and even as a student when I mistakenly walked into the wrong room late, without a pass! By the third period, the shadowed child would answer most of the other students questions about who I was. The boys seemed much more curious about me than the girls. They were the only ones that wanted to read what I was writing. My presence in the classes did not seem to disturb the normal activities or the normal behavior of the shadowed student.

There were two areas that stood out mostly in my mind about the child's day. The first was how much writing she did in one day. Most of it being copying things from the board.

The other thing was how the role of the students in most classes was a passive role. The kids seem to spend most of their time either reading or writing, very seldom talking or discussing. The lack of verbal communication between kids and kids and teachers and kids was disturbing.

My observations of this child indicated that a child's behavior is certainly dictated by the environment. In the classes where there was structure and little freedom, the child behaved as the norm, quiet, still and diligently working. In the classes where there was more freedom and where the noise level was higher, the shadowed student was more talkative and more open.

In all six classes the student did all of her assigned work and in two of her classes (5th and 6th periods) she enthusiastically volunteered to read aloud, and did so quite well. I did not witness any abnormal or troublesome behavior in the student.

The child did seem to be somewhat of a loner and maybe could use some friends, both teachers and students. This student demonstrated a need for more activity or exploratory based classes. She has no PE this semester and even her home economics class was a pencil and paper one.

I did come home after this day feeling rather depressed, I would not want to be a 7th grader in that school. I also felt like kidnapping the young girl to show her that life and school can be fun and that I would be her friend. It was an enlightening experience for me.

Interview with Shadowed Student

A. What would you tell a friend about your school?

"It's boring. Everytime you tell a teacher something, they get hysterical, they have a cow. It is no fun. But it is better than elementary school. I like it here ok, I guess. Teachers are all right. I really like ______ and ______ because they like to kid around with you and they don't get real mad. I like the teachers that are nice to you, you know like friends."

B. If you could change anything about your school, what would it be and how would you change it?

"I wouldn't have anymore swats! *Swats aren't fair, like if you get in a fight, or when you ditch. But sometimes you're not even ditching and boys aren't really fighting, they're just fooling around. And that is just the way boys are. If I were the principal, I would call the parents if the students were bad, I wouldn't use swats. I got a swat once for being late to class. They thought I was ditching but I wasn't. I lost my earring and I couldn't find it and my mom would really get mad if I lost it. I don't get swats at home, they just throw me around.

If I were principal I would have PE for everyone, all the time. We should also get rid of math. I hate math!

*Swats refers to paddlings. There is corporal punishment in these schools. In this school it is administered by the principal. In many schools it is the job of the Assistant Principal, but in this school the assistant principal is a woman, so the principal handles discipline.

When I explained to the child what I had been doing all day and the purpose of the research, she had great fear her mother would read it. She was somewhat embarrassed about her behavior - especially when I asked her about the punishment box in her fifth period class. At the conclusion of the interview, she thought maybe she was a pretty important person. She said she would like to read the research when it was finished and that it was a good thing for teachers to know more about kids. Then they would not get hysterical! She did say that I should have told her in the morning what I was doing because then she would have been better. She understood when I explained, she might not have then been herself! She was a very perceptive and likeable youngster, and very cooperative.

SHADOW STUDY NUMBER 4

A 5-8 middle school located in a city, with an enrollment of 950 students.

TIME	BEHAVIOR	ENVIRONMENT
8:20	Kenny was the class runner for his Homeroom. Seating arrangements placed him at the front of the room.	A typical classroom, chairs in rows across. Teacher standing at desk. Homeroom is detached from main building and gym. Students have to go outside for gym and regular subject classes.
8:30	Kenny talked quietly with his seat mate. Others were quietly talking. He participated in the class pledge.	
8:40 Gym	Subject was the first one out of homeroom going to gym. Was the first one to get dressed and get the first game ball.	Gym was divided into two parts. One for foul line shooting of basketball, the other equipped with a trampoline. Included among staff were two P.E. teachers and a health teacher.
8:50	Passed game balls to other students, very active, appears to be a leader in this class. Gave directions to other students - was gym teacher's helper.	
9:00	Taking turn at shooting foul shots. Is cooperating with one other student assigned to throw balls back to subject. He listens intently to instructions from teacher and appears to want to be the first in action.	

9:10 Gym	Kenny went into other room for the other part of total gym experience. Took his place beside trampoline for the safety of participating students. Is listening to instructions from teacher. Gives directions to other students...waiting his turn.	
9:15	Takes his turn on trampoline. Does very poorly. Appears to be uncoordinated.	
9:20	Rushes to change clothing. First to lead other students to 2nd period class.	
9:25 English	A selected group of students were chosen to put sentences on board. Subject's work was not selected. He quietly observes other students.	Classroom is in main building-chairs are in two rows with four desks/each. Teacher is walking around room selecting papers for demonstration purposes.
9:35	Other students are volunteering for activity. Kenny has not volunteered.	Teacher has good classroom management and rapport with her students.
9:45	Appears to be mentally involved. Has his homework before him. Has not responded yet, and seems to be getting restless, is tilting his seat backward.	
9:55	When called upon, he did not know what the question was about. Teacher had to comment about him talking to seat mates.	
10:05	Teacher had to warn him twice about leaning back in seat.	Teacher has had an opportunity to allow all students in the class to respond.
10:15	Subject is not actively engaging in classroom discussion, has made no comments.	
10:25	Kenny is doing the written work required of him. This work is a chapter end test. Had to sharpen pencil.	
10:30	Turns in written work. Observer will follow-up subsequently.	
10:30	Change of class.	
10:35 History	Class is preparing for a "Black History Week" play. Subject does not have a part. He is quietly observing other students rehearsing.	Classroom arrangement is the same pattern as previous classroom.
10:45	Teacher encouraged subject to join the chorus for the play. He is actively participating in singing.	
10:55	Practice continues. Subject continues to take part.	
11:05 History	Kenny answered a question and made a nice comment regarding play procedures for March 3, 1977. Made it voluntarily. First comment in class since gym.	
11:15	Appeared to have gained recognition in previous suggestion. Other students appear to be more favorably inclined toward him.	
11:25	Change of class.	Typical conventional classroom. Students come here before lunch to leave books. They return after lunch for math. One

		half of the students will go to Spanish class at this time.
11:30	Subject is lining up for lunch.	
11:40	Subject is quietly talking with friends in the lunch line.	
11:45	Kenny is eating lunch quietly. Has been quiet all day.	Lunch room lends itself to good management. Principals and associates are cooperating with teachers in good supervision.
11:55	Continues to eat, there is no loud talking but soft communication with friends. Finishes and takes tray to disposal unit and returns to math class.	
12:00 Math	Teacher gives Kenny some coloring material for a project. Coloring designs on book covers.	A typical classroom. Very colorful with math objects and other designs.
12:10	Continues to color. Is visiting friend across room. Talking quietly.	
12:20	Continues to color.	
12:30	Kenny is now working with his friend on block building. Other students are observing. Period appears to be more of a work-study project situation than a class.	
12:40	Preparing to attend assembly program. Returns to Homeroom.	
12:45	Kenny leads other students to the assembly program.	Auditorium is unusually well kept and large. Seats are very comfortable.
12:55	Subject is waiting for the program to begin. Talks quietly with friends.	
1:05	Kenny is watching the performance. Appears to be enjoying same.	
1:15	Continuing	
1:25	Continuing	
1:35	Continuing	
1:45	Appears to be getting bored. Slipping down in seat. Squirming, becoming restless.	
1:55	Appears to be asleep.....	
2:05	Is paying attention now. Play is filled with action, and he appears to be more involved with it.	
2:15	Continuing	
2:20	Play concludes, writer requested the teacher to send Kenny to the office.	
2:25	Subject was interviewed by this writer, and was dismissed from the interview at 2:45 for Homeroom and bus.	

Summary

The Shadow Study Project allowed me an opportunity to get into the mainstream of academic concepts and procedures as these relate to the 10-14 year old students. It allowed me an opportunity to make a time and initiative study of this group, and observe the reactions in peer group social and educational relationships.

It provided me with additional information in assisting the 10-14 year old pupil to become aware of themselves physically, emotionally and socially. The physical setting of the school, and the classroom techniques employed by each of Kenny's teachers were conducive to a non-threatening environment. Whereas the subject did not overtly respond to all of the questions, this writer believes he gained more than was observed by his attentiveness in class. The teachers created a pleasant atmosphere for learning, and gave each child an opportunity for self-expression.

He became bored, however, without his math and science classes, as was evident by his actions in the assembly program (slipping down in his seat, sleeping, etc.). Whereas, the Middle School Philosophy denotes all inclusive activity orientation, the break in the academic routine was a complete waste for him. He participated actively and passively in classes adequately. He has good peer and teacher rapport and responded well to the calm academic environment. He did not respond orally to many of the questions asked; however, he did not appear apprehensive about written testing. He came prepared to his classes, was on time (leading most of them), and was extremely cooperative throughout.

It was a joy to have this type of educational involvement.

Student Interview

The following is suggested in response to questions asked:

1. What would you tell a new friend about your school?

Answer: "I would tell them that this is a good school because

- a. Teachers discuss things with students.
- b. If they think you have a problem, they will assist you.
- c. They will stay after school with you and help you make up assignments, or work on new ones.
- d. They are honestly concerned about our welfare."

2. If you could change anything about your school, what would it be and how would you change it?

Answer: "There would be nothing I would change about ______, Absolutely nothing."

SHADOW STUDY NUMBER 5

A 7-8 middle school, located in a large city, with an enrollment of 420.

TIME	BEHAVIOR	ENVIRONMENT
7:45 Halls		Quiet activity of arriving students, at lockers, talking. No obvious running nor pranks.
7:48 Homeroom	Marilyn listened, with her head leaning on her arm. She did not talk while others made announcements. Seemed content with life.	Teacher oriented me to where Marilyn would sit. Desk/chair units were in rows. I asked a student where I might sit. "Sit in Charles' seat. He has tonsilitis. He gave it to his desk." (ha, ha)

7:55	Probably more so than the others, she seemed resigned to being in school and to what was going on around her.	Teacher raised voice to shout some announcements. Warned about paper cups for bottled water in regular fountains. Students freely hub-bubed comments, though they sat at their desks after settling in. They semi-listened to announcements over PA system by a student.
8:00		The principal walked in at one point, and no notice was made by students.
8:05 Halls	She found an apparently close girl friend in the hall, semi-animatedly talking with her and sticking close together, going into next class, then out when nothing yet seemed to be happening then returning.	Again, reasonably quiet movement of students, some stopping at lockers, getting a drink from the novel water bottles and paper cups, scurrying to find friends or clarify what schedule and group was theirs for the day.
8:07	Marilyn and a friend, once back in the room, quickly sat down at a rear table and got work materials out. Like most, she was not quite in gear for work, but she made motions expected of her, without teacher motivation.	The room was narrow and long, with teacher's desk at front and student desk-tables which could seat up to 8 around them.
8:10	Marilyn asked the lead teacher something, which proved to be asking to go to the library. She was back in 3 minutes. There was some friendly hitting among the three at her table. Then two more girls came and sat there. She finished her spelling book exercises, put her paper away and put her time in appearing to read but not really mentally engaged. Talked with her friends at the table.	There were 24 students scattered around, some alone, some in groups of 3 to 5. The atmosphere was free, with much talking. At the beginning some milled around the teacher's desk, talking to him, getting papers with socials studies' questions. One teacher brought in a typewriter to make a ditto. The social studies teacher did what teachers think they should do for visitors - gave me a detailed explanation of texts and work books. During this, students talked on and did their "written work".
8:20	Marilyn was eager to answer my questions. Said she liked the new social studies book and liked her school. Said they were finishing spelling and answering questions from new social studies book.	With the free study atmosphere, it was convenient for me to circulate, and I asked many students (so Marilyn would not suspect singling her out) what they were doing.
8:30 Halls Class Change	She went with her girlfriend to her locker. Put books away. Then she went directly to her seat in home ec., her next class.	Same business-like passage, with no bells. A minimum of "running around."
8:35 Home Ec.	Marilyn immediately sat down at the end of one table, with same girl friend.	The home ec room was set up for sewing and cooking. The twelve girls in the class first sat very quietly and attentively at tables listening to a substitute reading aloud to them about table setting. Then she read the directions and the questions they were to write answers to. Finally, one girl asked what page she was on - had given wrong one.
8:40	She listened very carefully and was very quiet.	
8:50	She got right at her written assignment. While working, she whispered a sentence or so.	
9:00	She was very much interested in handling items in the kitchen until she took initia-	All obediently, silently wrote requested answers. When most were through, she

	tive to do the washing in her team and worked industriously all the time.	told them they could go look over the kitchen areas. In 3 self-made groups they tentatively poked around. Teacher said, when one asked, they could wash utensils in cupboards, which they happily did. End of class!
9:30 Hall Class Change	Marilyn went directly to her next class. Another girlfriend came to her door to talk with her, which they did, briefly.	Another girl asked me what my schedule was, wishing I'd go with her next. Most students were kind and un-self-conscious. The school conveyed an atmosphere of enjoyment of being there.
9:28 Social Studies	Marilyn sat waiting, obediently. As she sat, she seemed to have her mind on the hall, as she sat in a front seat, facing the window overlooking the hall.	Class was slow in starting, as both teacher and students were easy-going. 24 students met in the same room that Marilyn was in at 8:07.
9:40	She seemed to listen because she felt she was supposed to. Her mind appeared to be engaged perfunctorily. She dutifully took notes. One would guess she is a neat legible writer.	The teacher announced a text for the day, urging students to listen carefully. He told them to take notes on the film on "climate" which he proceeded to show. During the film, the teacher stood by the projector or at the back of the room, talking...Students swivaled around to look. Some paid attention. Some pretended to. Same few asked dutiful questions. The teacher asked named students questions and repeated their answers and spelled words from the film for them. He talked on and on. Teacher said to class, "You'd better watch film. You won't learn anything out there." (hall)
10:04 Break	Marilyn went out into the hall with her friend and waved to someone there, through the window of the next class. She stuck with one girl all the time. They went with the crowd to the bottle of drinking water. They came back to class. Apparently seeing nothing happening yet, they went back out to the hall. Went into the girls' lavatory and spruced up at the mirrors. Then they went back to class.	Others seemed to be doing about the same thing.
10:10 Social Studies cont'd	Marilyn Sat. She propped her paper of her already written answers by her book, looking at them.	The teacher handed out sheets of study questions. Then he stopped and called on Bob, who had figured mileage in each latitude. No one especially followed, but they sat. The teacher told him, "I'll give you something extra for that."
10:27	Marilyn sat through it. She did not turn around. During the story she was passive. She leafed through her book. Marilyn answered her question, which the teacher said was correct, but went on to tell her to add something. She nodded acceptance, seemingly not threatened. When hub-bub of class occurred over "gory" story, she talked to her friend at other end of table over something else.	Teacher told a story about a man who cut trees with a diamond saw. He stood at the back of the room, talking to the backs of the students, who were not much interested. Teacher called on Marilyn (and others) for answers on their papers. He did not add to anyone else's.
10:35	She was not distracted by her table mates' playing with coins and pencils. She looked	Continuing oral checking of answers on sheets.

	down at her book. Seemed comfortable in her own world.	
10:41 Math	Marilyn went directly to this class, next door. She got her independent workbook from the cupboard, sat down, and neatly printed her work on the answer sheets.	
10:50	She continued steadily working even when the girl beside her talked to her.	
11:00	Once, she asked teacher for help. She turned in her book and papers and then sat. Girl beside her talked. Marilyn put her arm on her head.	Math was taught entirely as independent study, with no class instruction. Students worked through books, asking teacher help only when needed.
11:15 Lunch	Marilyn did more listening and PE-ing than talking. She was not outgoing with the group, but she obviously enjoyed being with them. After eating, she and her best friend roamed the hall and gym, briefly watching games.	The math room served also as the cafeteria. Other 7th graders came in. Juke box not playing that day. A group of 8, including Marilyn, sat together, and I joined them and was included in the conversation which was about the food and horse-riding and weather. After lunch, students wandered to the gym, to rest rooms, in halls.
11:50 "TA" (Team Area, actually Study Time)	Marilyn sat behind another girl. She wrote something for a while, which appeared to be letters in code.	Three teams of students met in two rooms, with dividers open, with two of the team teachers present, circulating, and somewhat raising voices to urge that work be done. It was explained as a time for doing any assignment in any subject, take make-up tests, and then you could do what you wanted. Some played cards. All talked freely. One student pronounced spelling words as a make-up test for about 5 students. One or two read a book. some boys played with the drinking cups as dunce cups and put tape on mouths. The teacher talked some away from the water bottle in the hall back into the room, where they sat, joking.
12:00	She was the most animated during the day at this time. She talked with Tina.	Desks were mostly in rows, though some were pushed close or turned to face each other. One boy, trying to read, when I asked if he thought they had too much study time, said he could not have too much, as he could get assignments done and not have to take work home. He also said there were no serious trouble-makers in 7th grade, maybe because of the neighborhoods they came from. It appeared "chaotic" to me, with too much time on their hands.
12:35 English	Marilyn was dependably in her seat, waiting for the others to be ready. She had chosen a back seat in the corner. She sat. Looked at her fingers, casually.	The room dividers were closed, and this class met in one side. Marilyn sat in the same seat. This room had also been her home room. Desks were movable and individual, in traditional rows. Teacher had to work to obtain quiet. There was a big space between her at her desk and the front row of students. She moved to a stool closer to her class.

12:50	Marilyn handed in her paper as assigned and called for. Passed it to girl ahead in her row.	Teacher led a discussion of a story and words in it. Apparently she had asked them to write answers to questions at the end. There were groans when reminded to have written work. Paper-back magazines were handed out for reading a play.
12:55 English cont'd	Marilyn leaned forward to talk to girl friend, covered by the confusion of assignment of parts for reading. She did not raise her hand to volunteer, and, of course, was not chosen. During the reading, she followed her script, placidly. She put her hands in her book and talked to Berta as the play continued.	Teacher: "The last class didn't get through this. I don't know if you can or not. Probably not." Characters chosen: "Who wants to be ______?" Many hands waved excitedly. The class followed the reading with interest. To me, it was not a very interesting nor challenging play. The lucky participants merely read, from where they sat. Class members helped when a student stumbled over a word or missed a cue. They did not finish. They gathered up the booklets in a flurry and moved to the next class.
1:10 Science	Marilyn sat in back corner with her team of two other girls. Her face expressed concern and dismay when the teacher told about another group, using straws, had found the weight of their bridge was very high. (Marilyn's group had been experimenting with straws to build their bridge.)	Recognizable as a science room by teacher's instruction table and a few charts. The teacher, with great enthusiasm, was pushing them hard to build a bridge in a contest - lightest weight to bear load.
1:30	Her group worked with straws, glueing and talking about it. They didn't make much progress, bud fiddlingly tried.	Groups of 2, 3, or 4 around the room made attempts to build bridges. Some moved around, weighing a paper straw or crowding around the teacher's testing of bridges. He kept pounding at them to lighten their weight and strengthen their supports "Today's work is crucial." "Bill wanted to talk with me. He likes his school. New. Has equipment like video tape. Would change some teachers to "not so grouchy; more human". Would improve the air conditioning and build tennis courts. He would change the grading. They send failing notices every 4½ weeks. He is "seeking to find himself." Said his dad is smart. I was told later this boy is a learning disability student. He didn't appear so.
1:40	Marilyn stayed patiently, happily, with her group.	
2:15	She was very much surprised and obviously very pleased when she learned she had been randomly picked to "shadow". Said nothing like that had ever happened to her in her life.	I asked her if she'd come tell me about her school and we took chairs to the hall.
2:33	Marilyn beamed with joy.	I briefly explained to the class what I had been doing all day and thanked them all and Marilyn (publicly), congratulating them on their school.
end of school day	Marilyn went off to bus bubbling.	

Description of observed student: Marilyn is an attractive girl, neat, clean. She wore new blue jeans, a red, white, and blue knit blouse with cap sleeves with a navy, knit under-blouse, with short sleeves (despite the snow and cold weather and supposedly turned-down thermostats to save fuel). Around her neck was a chrome silver pendant in the shape of a dollar sign $. She wore socks and navy blue sneakers. Her hair was dark brown, long to her shoulder blades. She had painted her finger nails blue. Obviously she was well-groomed.

Outwardly, she appeared to be placid, accepting, self-secure, obedient. In most classes, she slumped on the end of her spine, at a slant away from her desk.

The adjective best describing Marilyn is the one she repeatedly used about others in our interview at the end of the day (and reflects the truth that the way we describe others contains the essence of *our* being, perhaps more than theirs) - "nice". She is a nice girl, in every complimentary sense of the word.

End-of-day interview with Marilyn

What would you tell a friend about your school?
It is nice, I like it.
Why? We have our own lockers.
It is a better school.
Why? It is little, not huge.
The teachers treat you not like a little kid.
We can be free, like at lunch time.
We have only three main classes, not many classes.
I like the way the teachers teach.
If you could change anything about your school what would it be and how would you change it?
Have vending machines for candy.
Have more room.
Have nicer students.
How? Well, be nice to them and maybe they'd be nice.
Get students to be nicer to teachers.
Not have teasing. I don't like teasing.
I like my team of teachers. Glad I have them.
I don't like the other team.
What is the most important thing in your life?
Friends.
About how many friends do you have?
10 But one best. We go everywhere together.
When are you most alive?
When I am visiting my friends.
When I am at home, with friends.
What do you like to do best?
Go with my friend and her dad when he comes to take her places every weekend. (I gathered he has visiting rights as divorced)

Who is your family?
Two parents, 1 brother, 4 step brothers and sisters.
Whom are you closest to?
My mom.
Who understands you the best?
My girl friend.
What did you like best about school today?
Having you visit as an observer, even before I knew you had picked me.
What do you think you learned, and what did you like in your classes today?
Looking at the kitchen in *home ec.*
Watching the movie in *social studies.*
Looking over *English* written work.
Making bridges in *science.*
Not Like:
just sitting, sitting, listening, sitting
liked all of it
What made you the happiest?
Being picked to be observed.
Next to that, in your classes?
I was proudest to hand in my English assignment.
What do you like about your teachers?
They are nice.
They are not strict.
What do you wish they'd do differently?
I wish they'd let us talk more.
What do you mean?
I mean, let us do things and talk more about our class work instead of listening.
Let us enter into it.
How would you describe yourself?
A nice girl. Nice.
I don't like for boys to call me names.
Do you mind telling me what you wrote in those notes you passed today?
O, I don't mind. I said, "Call me" "Come over"
Our time is up. Is there anything you'd like to add?
I'm glad I got this school.
It's best because it's nice.

Summary of my reactions

First, thank you for a new experience. Although I have observed in many schools and classes, it has been general. I have seen the scope of student response (or reaction!) and have identified with teacher success or failure to communicate, but this time I tried to put myself fully into ONE student, seeing through her eyes, walking everywhere she did, and feeling how she might feel toward what was happening to her in her school day. The teachers didn't understand why I turned down their invitation to eat lunch with them for choosing, instead, the "Noisy" student lunchroom. And I also wanted a girl so I could follow all student steps, even into the restroom and P.E. lockers! In the process, I found a new friend. Marilyn and I hope to continue occasional contacts. In fact, I am excited about a kind of follow-through study to see if any change might occur in Marilyn's life as a result of this day of shadow study.

Her school records show her to be a low-ability, low-graded (many D's and F's) student. The initial disappointment shown when I pulled her name indicated her school image. I believe that, like many average-ability, "nice" students, she has been catergorized, labeled, and put in her place without hope of challenging and e-ducating latent ability within her. Being docile, she does not object to the system and will probably become an average American citizen, obedient to that system, unless too much bottled-up resentments emerge in later teen-age years or later life relationships.

From her conscientious paper work (her security), her correct verbal answers, her confident manner and tone of voice when she did speak, her ability to see a task and do it, her healthy relationships and normal desire to be with friends, her self-reliance in quietly completing assignments, her acknowledgement of need to ask for teacher help when appropriate, Marilyn exhibited more than I heard her school giving her encouraging credit for - either to me or, more importantly, to her.

It all puzzled me. Here is a middle school, recognized as superior. The principal is a fine administrator - visionary of all good concepts, an implementer par excellence by choosing capable middle school oriented teachers and overseeing the construction of a flexible physical environment. The students are content and say they like their school. The atmosphere is easy-going. There were no obvious severely misbehaving pupils. The words were right. The community seems pleased. The teachers like their jobs.

Yet, I saw Marilyn - and all the other Marilyns - sitting through a teacher's reading the text to them; sitting through 30-40 minutes of study hall (albeit called "Team Area"); writing routine answers from questions at the end of the chapter or filling in work sheets; sitting watching a film and taking notes with no discussion; listening (?) to a teacher talking to their backs from the back of a room; doing math papers alone with the only incentive being, "Hurry up"; and finding simple joy in being allowed to read from their seats, volunteering for parts, a dull play, or cutting up straws to build a paper bridge - for what, really?

The only tentative answer I have is that they have gone farther than many schools, in providing an atmosphere for learning with a fine physical plant. They have a concept beyond question and what research recommends. They have a faculty interested in persons and teaming together in productive schedule planning (day by day). They have a principal who has set the scene and trusts his staff. They have gone this far, and it is great. The students have caught an inkling of this and are responding because it is better than what they have had. The variety each day of their schedule, arranged by the team of teachers (and they do this well), keeps the students interested and alert.

The next step, the missing one, is the crucial one. It seems to me to be the great leap of teacher improvement in teaching skills, the leap of faith to let students do their own learning, to participate in the process. This is what will make the difference. For how many Marilyns will it be too late?

SHADOW STUDY NUMBER 6

A 6-8 middle school, located in the outskirts of a large city, with an enrollment of 840 students.

TIME	BEHAVIOR	ENVIRONMENT
8:15 Band	Got instrument from storage, put together. Visiting with students in her section. Warm-up practice.	Teacher visiting with students, wrapping up previous stage band practice.
8:25	Got up to front of room, tossed note to fellow classmate.	Teacher making announcement re: "Master band" try-outs
8:35	Playing with band	Teacher conducting with emphasis on drums
8:45	Playing with band	Teacher conducting with emphasis on flutes and tuba
8:55	Listening to teacher explanation re: tempo	Teacher instructing re: tempo & volume of specific sections
9:05 PE	In locker room dressing	
9:15	Sitting on floor combing hair	Taking roll
9:25	Head in hands - taking written exam on volley ball and re-viewing responses	In gymnasium
9:35	Kneeling on floor, combing hair, talking with volley ball team members which have been selected by student captain	Instructor supervising selection of volley ball teams by student captains
9:45	Served ball, disgusted when teammate did not handle return - demonstrated wrist action to another teammate	
9:55	Grimacing at consecutive loss of points -"coaching" teammates who missed points	
10:05	Playing on net an straightening her hair	
10:15	In shower room	
10:20 Math	Throwing sponge erasers at math classmates from front two desk	Teachers supervising in hall
10:30	Assistance from teacher in working problems in math packet	Teacher at desk helping students as they identify problems with math packet problems
10:40	Explained to shadow observer the problems she was working on in the packet	Individual work - quiet relaxed class atmosphere. Was seated somewhat isolated from class because boys sitting nearby "bugged her"
10:50	Continue individual work in math packet	
11:00	Checking work with answer sheets	
11:10	Working on packet	
11:20	Working on packet	
11:25 Soc. Stud.	Writing in another student's autograph book. Waiting for class to start	Typical social studies classroom - teacher taking roll

11:35	Copying chart from book	Class discussion with teacher asking questions as introduction to new unit on food and population
11:45	Looking at filmstrip and listening to student responses to discussion questions	
11:55	Volunteered short answer to teacher inquiry	
12:05	Working on homework - discussing a question with girl across aisle	Teacher circulating in class answering individual questions
12:15	Work sheet - discussing a question with neighbor	
12:25	To locker, then to lunch line	
12:35	Eating lunch	
12:45	On playground with friends, being chased by 2 boys	
1:05 Science	To classroom with friend - happy, combing hair, offered chair to observer	Teacher - routine attendance activities
1:15	Visiting with neighbor, observing guinea pig	Class review prior to test - student questions: teacher response
1:25	Working on test	
1:35	Working on test	
1:45	Working on test comparing answers with neighbors	
1:55	Review exam - complete items not answered initially	
2:05 Reading	Last second entry to room - then review of materials	Opening of class activities - roll, prep for class discussion and review
2:15	Watching with dismay as boys run up score in spelling baseball game	
2:25	Pondering the spelling of words specifically "dodge"	Quiet, teaching pronouncing spelling words and using in sentence
2:35	Desk - work sheet identifying main idea, answering details, vocabulary and thought questions on a previously read story	Quiet, work-like teacher assistance as requested
2:45	Still with work sheet	
2:55	Volunteering during class discussion Responded to opinion and value question when called upon by teacher	Teacher-led discussion of worksheet questions

Student Interview

What would you tell a new friend about your school?

The student responded by saying that the school was too big, although the facilities were good and provided them with opportunities that she did not have in her previous school (which was a small rural school). The teachers are nice, helpful, and provide her with assistance in coping with academic problems which she may have. She has had to work harder than she did in the smaller school that she attended previously. In her former school, she was in one classroom all day long. She does not like the current procedure of changing rooms and classes for each subject. In addition, she does not feel that there is sufficient passing time (they have five minutes). She likes having her own locker in her new school. The hot lunch program is a new program for her. She likes the lunches and enjoys the company of her fellow classmates during the lunch hour. She has had no difficulty in making friends. She likes the students with whom she attends school, thinks they are nice and enjoys their company. She is particularly impressed with the quantity and quality of the AV materials which are available in this school. She feels it helps in her studies and in her learning experiences. Another thing which she likes are the athletic programs available to girls. She participates to the extent possible.

If you could change anything about your school—what would it be and how would you change it?

She would like to make it possible to stay in one classroom all day. She would also like to see students allowed to leave the school grounds for the lunch period, whether they have a lunch pass or not. Another change she would like to make is a smaller school. Having come from a small school of under 100 students, a school of 850 seems large and imposing to her. Although she has friends, there is an impersonal quality generated by size alone. She would also improve the athletic fields by putting a track around the practice field. Track is one of her favorite sports and a track would enable her to follow this pursuit under more favorable conditions.

Reactions to Shadow Study

We do put students through quite a routine each day and our expectations of them are equally high. A considerable amount of time, energy and money are expended on behalf of the students for the serious business of education. Yet within this serious vein, school can be fun and students demonstrated it throughout the day. This particular student seemed to respond more positively in those class settings where expectations were clearly delineated by the teacher and maintained in a firm, relaxed and humane manner. In situations where the expectations were not clearly defined, our student (and others) were not as task-oriented. Students of middle school age are at greatly varying degrees of development and maturity—socially, psychologically and intellectually. This fact is recognized by the students themselves and adjustments are usually made in the class in the social settings by the student. In this particular case, school was a learning experience to our subject, but it was also a fun experience. The learning process was enhanced by previous planning which had been done by the teaching team. This team planning tied terms, concepts and knowledge together across academic lines and served to reinforce the learning in each specific area. I think that the student not only recognized this integration, but seemed to appreciate it. Further, it seemed to help the students as they tried to learn by applying knowledge from other areas into the subject matter at hand. I enjoyed the day and felt that this student and most others are appreciative of the efforts to provide them a quality education. It goes without saying that (in general) they are a gregarious lot who enjoy their schooling experience.

5 THE MIDDLE SCHOOL IN ACTION: AN ANALYSIS

Readers who have vicariously visited the six schools presented in the previous chapter have undoubtedly already formulated some tentative generalizations and conclusions. This chapter presents the analyses of the authors based on a reading of all the studies together with the judgments of the Teacher Analysis Panel. It also includes considerable supporting interpretations from the "shadowers" themselves. The analysis follows the format of the list of distinguishing characteristics that was presented in Chapter Three.

Neither the panelist the "shadowers," nor the writers claim profound objectivity in matching what they read and saw with the characteristics of middle school education. This study communicates professional impressions as much as hard data. The reader may not agree that a particular quotation relates to a middle school characteristic; one may, in fact, conclude somewhat differently from panelists or authors. Variations of this kind are expected - just as in the interviews students often opined that their schools were "good," though observers decried the lack of individualization and involvement. With such a background and rationale we present our analysis of the shadow studies.

A. AN INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM responsive to the values, objectives and needs of society as well as the needs of young adolescents.

Educators have always argued that the instructional program of the era was responsive to the needs of youth. Yet, the nature of the program evolves primarily from the adult view of society and what is needed to prepare youth for its demands. Only in recent decades have we begun to take seriously the notion that the needs of students to deal with the world at their stage of growth is important. All too often, we affirm that what the adult thinks youth needs are precisely the needs youth feel.

The middle school, as the junior high school before it, has pledged to serve the needs of youth in their society *and* their needs in the broader context of the adult world awaiting them. As a statement of belief, most middle school educators would assert their allegience; as practitioners, they seem not to have understood too well. Five indicators of commitment to an instructional program geared to the needs of society and of youth now follow to delineate where we are.

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1. *Community as educational resource.* A close examination of raw data from the Shadow Studies reveals that only in a few instances was there evidence of community involvement. The traditional field trip constituted the main utilization of the school locale. Almost never was the community used as a site for instructional activities such as moving a science class to an adjacent wooded area for an intensive study of the animal or plant varieties found there.

In two specific instances, however, and both in physical education, the community became an extension of the school setting, but only to utilize a facility. A YMCA pool, located across town (students were bussed) was the locale for instruction in swimming. In the other situation, students walked across the street to a recreation center for physical education. The shadowed student, in response to the question about what would you change about your school, stressed the need for a gymnasium. The value of shared facilities did not seem evident.

In support of the above view, one observer wrote: "Kids, particularly middle schoolers, need to see their home and community as being related to their school/educational experiences. If we as educators cannot establish that relationship we have failed, at least in this one instance, to make our curriculum relevant."

Another teacher panelist reported that his studies showed guest speakers, both adults and students, have been in classes. In one case eighth graders demonstrating the use of a blood pressure cuff and stethoscope. A striking example of community involvement occured in the school which boasted a "poet in residence." This program probably was the result of a federal grant for the improvement of the arts through humanities.

In summary, then, middle schools in this study showed evidence of the more common uses of community involvement: guest speakers, field trips, student help. The use of community sites for planned and regular learning experiences seemed limited to the recreation park and the YMCA swimming pool. If we extrapolate beyond the data, then we may conclude that the community as a resource and site for instructional involvement has yet to come of age.

2. *Comprehensive, developmental skills program.* One wonders if the force of the back to the basics movement may be exerting clear pressure to stress the traditional subjects: mathematics, language arts, social studies, and science. Certainly all students in the study on February 17th were receiving instruction in these areas. Curiously, a large number of students were working with fractions in mathematics, and parts of speech in language.

The phrasing of this indicator implies rather strong organization and breadth. There is also the concomitant implications that such a skills continuum would embrace our best thinking about the needs and concerns of youth. That is to say, the skills would be arranged in terms of youth needs first and subject matter logic second. The writers, and probably most middle school educators, would ascribe to this approach while recognizing that in practice scope and sequence progressions adhere to a hierarchial construction applied by educators and textbook writers.

What did our 100 observers note in their day in the classroom? One student described his school in this fashion: "We're still doing things I did in 5th grade at another school." This statement suggests a poorly designed skills program. The prevalent classroom pattern observed also implies a long-standing pattern in which students hand in homework, go over it in class, and then are introduced to the next homework assignment. The margin of hope that skills are closely tied to where the transescent is would appear small in such settings.

In a general science class, however, the classroom environment was recorded as:

> Students working alone or in groups of two or three. They are using several different manuals and doing a variety of things. Two high school students serving as teachers, are moving from table to table.

Evidently this classroom has a skills base which has been modified by materials selection to accommodate several ability levels. On the other hand, instruction in physical education was almost universally on the skills of basketball. This might suggest that the indoor-outdoor conditions dictate completely which sport is taught in mid-February rather than the maturational requirements of thirteen year olds?

But again a panelist noted:

> In reading there was a comprehensive, developmental skills program provided for each pupil shown by the subject using a SRA card, a math pretest, and working by a math schedule.

Similar efforts at individualization were noted in language arts, mathematics, science, industrial arts, and art. The skills may be the same for all, but students move along the continuum at their achievement levels. "Students demonstrate law of probability by rolling dice." Nice variation. "An effort was made to meet the student at his level. An informed, enthusiastic teacher made history fit the kids' lingo and language level." Still another comment by an observer: "Much of skill development centered on teacher directed activities." And he continues: "I was so disappointed to see a written test format where there are so many other ways to test. Seventy-five per cent of skills sequence was testing or review."

If the reader is sensing something of a polarization of Shadow Studies impressions, he is reading the authors and their sources correctly. Skills are developmental, but not always sequential K-12 or even 6-8. They are more often based on an external order to discipline rather than its inherent organization. Skills are generally presented either to the class *en masse* or to individuals. This latter trend impelled one teacher analyst to write:

> As valuable as the individualization of instruction is, I am concerned, after reading what reporters wrote as to whether students are being put too much on their own, particularly in math. Skill development must be based on individual need, but group skills and processes are quite valuable...we need to be careful that we don't pigeon-hole students, give them an assignment, tell them to *go* and get to work and then promptly forget them as the next student approaches.

The same analyst states this conclusion:

> . . . I found little reporting of a developmental skill program. I do not feel, however, that this necessarily means it does not exist, merely that one day may not reflect a comprehensive program. Most of all the schools seemed to do a certain amount of ability grouping in academic areas in order to lessen the diversity of programs needed at a given time.

Middle schools, then, tend to lie in the middle between the more cohesive and pervasive developmental skills program in the elementary school and the more highly structured and compartmentalized emphasis of the high school.

3. *Exploratory and enrichment experiences.* Middle schools offer exploratory and enrichment experiences to expand the horizons of transescents. But then, so does the junior high school. The subtle difference which appears in the study schools is one of structure as this account stresses:

> Students choose from three thematic options per month for morning courses (e.g., geology, anthropology, batik). Offerings change each month. One hour in the morning is "free" for such activities as basketball, computer terminal, talking with teachers, etc.

While this pattern prevails in an alternative school, the more open curriculum is much in evidence in the regular public school.

One teacher panelist wrote:

> The vast majority of studied middle schools also offered courses entitled "exploratory", "special interest", mini-courses", and "electives." Student reponse to these were all reported as being very positive. "She likes her mini-course (embroidery), and her art class, but was not enthused about the academic classes." "She enjoys special interest period most -where she is taking sand painting and sculpture." A Catholic school offered course selections at the end of the day entitled "Communications," "Values Clarification," and others. These classes were voluntary choices made by the students. How a particular school scheduled these options seemed to depend on several different criteria: bus schedules, staff teaching loads, time of year, walking range of student body, etc. One significant observation referred to a history teacher with a cold class posture in history class, but with a very different personality in sand painting class. This would suggest teacher satisfaction and benefit in this area of curriculum besides the obvious student advocation of such courses.

The enrichment courses provide a more open and venturesome environment for students, but also for teachers. Another teacher panelist argues that a skillful teacher with an interest in art could easily teach an art enrichment course. The diversity is obvious but reflects also on the "loosening" of structure which would reverse the regular classroom atmosphere. The panelists saw in the enrichment phase of middle school curriculum an opportunity for youth to have maneuverability and self-direction. "This (art) seems to be the first opportunity for something other than teacher directed activity."

Evidence that exploratory courses in the career awareness area existed is inconclusive. One panelist saw little or no evidence. Another mentioned: ". . . each teacher incorporating a career aspect into his daily lesson plan." Panelists and observers did not, however, report many career awareness "episodes" in their accounts which suggests that either the area is dealt with in a designated unit or that attention is somewhat haphazard.

Perhaps as a harbinger of other curricular offerings, exploratory and enrichment courses are the expected - art, music, industrial arts, foreign language - with a significant "smattering" of courses that reflect contemporary interests.

4. *Program of Health and physical education.* For middle schoolers, this area should stress relevant health concerns, intramurals, and individualized developmental activities. Again the picture from our 100 schools is mixed. Most middle school students are scheduled for physical education daily. At the time of the observations, the vast majority of students were receiving some kind of instruction and practice in basketball. Gymnastics came in second along with the more unique examples of yoga and swimming.

In an area which is noted for its individualized approach, many students were receiving group instruction. Other students awaited their turn on the gym floor from a passive vantage point in the bleachers. One observer noted, however, that in gym the student experienced the only variation in the instruction-teach-test-reteach pattern of the day.

Health instruction revealed a varied pattern. Some classes were giving attention to blood pressure indicators, others appeared to be moving through a text somewhat en masse. The result — "Student has her eyes on book, but still has pen in hand (taking notes), writing occasionally." Then for at least 10 minutes the shadowed student was absorbed in ". . . putting string back in jacket that was pulled out by the boy sitting on the floor next to her." It would be safe to infer that the topic of that class couldn't compete with student playfulness.

Title IX auditors would be pleased that in at least one school girls were eagerly using the weight room - "teacher moves about to assist girls using the various pieces of body building apparatus." Relevance appears to be the key for many students who profit from health and physical education. One student inquired: "These lungs (calves) are like ours, right?" She pays very close attention as teacher explains parts of actual calves lung and heart.

In some physical education periods the instructors displayed passivity, "sitting on the sidelines and watching." Both interscholastic and intramurals were noted by observers. In the I-wonder-why-they-didn't category, a panelist observed:

> I was personally surprised to find that only one school offered any program of physical activity at lunch. In this case, it only involved the opening of the gym during the lunch hour. This would seem to be a chance for those highly active middle schoolers to work off their energy as well as learn how to participate with their peers in an unstructered social situation.

One does not come away from an examination of observers or panelist's comments with the impression that the physical education and health program in the middle school is a powerful contributor to the well being and growth of adolescents. The programs were not negative, simply short of their potential. The brightest message came from a panelist who stated: "I had the feeling . . . that many schools are moving to a station or competency-based program of physical education and fitness . . . Many students will profit from being accepted at their own level of competence rather than being compared to students with greater muscle development and coordination than they possess."

One observer sums up this curriculum area: "She seemed happiest in her music and physical education class, for there she could act freely."

5. *Personal-social concerns of adolescents.* If this indicator is translated to mean that content themes and problem areas draw subject matter which is appropriate to dealing with the specific concerns rather than presenting subject matter apart from its immediate relevance for problems facing young adolescents, then 100 Shadow Studies drew a blank. Very few observers noted that a particular unit topic or theme dealt with the "happenings" of the day.

Digging more deeply into the studies, however, observers and panelists provided data from which to infer, very carefully, that adolescent concerns were *among* the considerations determining what was taught. For example, a social studies teacher reminded ". . . students that part of the ecology assignment given by the reading teacher is for social studies." It is hoped that dual activities of this sort assist the student to discover the interdependence of knowledge. One English class was reading the novel, *That Was Then, This is Now,* by S. E. Hinton, a very strong story addressing adolescent concerns. Adolescent literature has become a positive force in helping transescents learn more about themselves and behavior alternatives available to them.

In a science room the richness of displays, habitats, and lab equipment was further enhanced by a "fascinating cupboard labeled 'Mystery powders' and pictures of *the kids* engaged in science activities around the rooms." Contrast that environment with an English-Social Studies block classroom in which the student shadowed busied herself by "writing in address book while film 'Population Explosion' is being shown."

An observer noted this evidence of concern for adolescent problems:

> P. is fortunate to have teachers who care very much about their students—without a doubt they see the importance of maintaining a climate of concern in addition to dealing with cognitive growth. One can readily see that team teaching is a positive step in promoting total understanding on the part of staff for the needs of the individual. Such a cooperative effort is student-centered and is indeed conducive to meeting the needs of the emerging adolescent.

Sadly, however, the observer went on to note that the reading teacher seemed unable to contribute to that team effort. In a contrasting vein in another school, however, ". . . the material was teacher-centered, with the presenter teacher lecturing, while the student was the absorber not the doer." Many classes appeared boring and repetitious. And in another study, "The program is teacher dominated and highly structured . . . Considerable effort goes into attempting to control student behavior . . . Teachers do not seem to deviate from the basic text used in the content areas."

Somewhat more subtle evidence enabled some panelists to feel good about the attention to the personal-social needs of adolescents: grouping arrangements and task groups within classrooms, interesting decor, small table arrangements in cafeterias, block scheduling to promote subject-matter merging, modern songs and music in chorus and band, opportunity for socialization during more flexible classes such as art and home economics, open classrooms, peer helping situations. This latter point was noted by a panelist in this fashion:

> This idea of peers helping peers solved not only academic problems, but also met particular unconscious social needs in a structured environment. This comment comes from yet another middle school: in this middle school seventh graders could be just that - . . . their social needs were easily accommodated in the group activities.

The evidence for this indicator seems to oscillate between strong concerns for the transescent as in the above statements and toward an atmosphere in which students marched along a rather firmly designed subject matter path.

One panelist sums it up rather well:

> In most cases, the instructional program offered opportunities for students to have a hand in the direction of the curriculum and often they were encouraged to do so. Again, long range content plans would be helpful to determine how fully this goal is being reached in an individual school. Students may learn about human sexuality and the physical problems of a transescent may experience at one school and not at another. Based on one day's observation, I find it difficult to predict the frequency of this happening. The attitude of the teachers and students would lead me to believe that kids in all the schools would have the opportunity of pursuing their own personal and social development.

Summary. The instructional program of the middle school is in itself in transition. The traditions of the junior high school continue to wield considerable influence, while the growing understanding of what early adolescence is all about is really just coming to be seen as significant. Unfortunately, the education profession does not absorb new knowledge readily nor transform its accustomed ways quickly. Pessimists will find relatively little to cheer about in the preceeding pages; but the optimists can see the shape of things to come. Transescents, it seems, are experiencing an instructional program which tries to give them "the time of day" and not just a curt nod.

B. INSTRUCTIONAL *STRATEGIES* AND *MATERIALS* individualized and personalized for each student's needs.

A distinguishing characteristic of middle school education is the centrality of concern for the needs of the transescent, not merely in his housing, but in the environment which clothes and feeds him. We have noted with some dismay that the curriculum, the food for the student, is not yet built upon the knowledge base we have of his needs, at least not to the extent that observers and panelists gave curriculum offerings high marks. There is another area of major significance in middle school education, however, which reflects the manner in which curriculum is presented to students. This characteristic in its most ambitious sense asks that instructional strategies and materials be individualized and personalized for each student's needs.

It would be expected, therefore, that the manner in which the student and content were brought together would be unique to that individual. Of course no school can provide a total, personalized instructional experience at all times for a student. But certainly the expectation for the middle school is that teachers are sensitive to where students are and will incorporate these perceptions into the planned learning activities.

We now turn to the evidence of February 17th to picture the instructional strategies and materials which are designed for seventh graders.

1. *Variety of instructional techniques*. The anticipation is that the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains would be evident; that there would be variety in learning situations to include group, individual, and total experiences; and that the teacher would alternate with other adults, peers, print and non-print sources as major information resources. But let the evidence speak.

"The hour was 1:15 p.m. and R. responds orally to question - first time all day she has done so." The art room was the setting. How strange that the most prevalent teaching technique, the question-answer routine, did not engage a student until the day was almost over. The observer's comment on this situation indicated that it was the non-academic class which seemed to motivate students, not the academic. It seemed that generally students were not questioned in a planned manner to insure that each person during the day had some oral interchange of ideas with his peers and adults.

During an individualized instruction period, the English teacher helps "D. work through some mistakes before it is graded." Super. In this situation a student is having an opportunity to demonstrate mastery of tested material in a manner which promotes understanding and explanation. The "test" is seen as a teaching tool in the best sense.

A more commonly noted instructional variation involved individualized instruction with students working on their own assignments. In two math classes students had a common topic introduced through a common text, but different math books were available for practice, a nice balance between single text dominance and diverse individualization.

Often the lecture is discounted too strongly as an effective instructional technique. A social studies teacher illustrated his presentation with the overhead projector, writing questions and review points, while "maintaining close eye contact with students." That final phrase shows concern for the transescent and the need to help him belong to the flow of class activities. Techniques such as this one break up the sameness of classes, while lack of variety prompted this observation:

> It was found that the instruction given and methods used did not always keep all the students actively involved in the classroom. This resulted in demonstrations of negative behavior by the students observed such as playing and talking out. Also there was excessive time lost with student movement from the dismissal of a class to the roll call in the next class.

Several observers noted the fatigue which accompanied the peaks of work and the times of non-activity. Group work was a technique found in almost every study, though one wonders why it must always be under the surveillance of the teacher. When students are truly "hooked" on the learning matter, supervision can be very loose.

Another interesting variation was the USSR time (*U*ninterrupted, *S*ustained *S*ilent *R*eading) - a period when everyone in school reads. All activities except those of an emergency nature come to a halt, adults and students, books in hand, read silently. There are no assignments to follow-up the reading. The time is open to adventure with books. This very positive technique was not, however, found in wide use. Perhaps it deviates too much from the read-recite-test-homework pattern.

A teacher analyst summarized the types of teaching techniques utilized in the studies he reviewed:

> Worksheets, experiments (in science classes), projects (in industrial arts and art), reading quietly, class discussions, filmstrips, taking notes, teacher lecturing, films, research in media center, study sheets, grading homework papers, oral recitation in large groups, question-answer, packets, writing, learning stations, transparencies, and group problem solving.

The analyst concluded, however: "Much of the school day seemed geared to listening or doing rather than telling by speaking in front of a group or talking with peers or teacher."

An observer stated: "Each class was highly structured with not enough opportunity for student participation." Another observed opined: "Most of the student's day was spent listening, reading, writing, and studying. Very little time was devoted to oral communication and discussion." The endless "going over of homework" should also be identified as a major element in the array of teaching techniques. Universally, observers and panelists wrote about the frequency of the homework ritual.

Just as the transescent is a varied person so are the strategies offered him:

- chairs moved to permit group work
- non-threatening atmosphere
- teaching is action-oriented in science
- played math games
- music - play your own record day
- developmental reading program
- multi-aged groupings
- use of student tutors and demonstrators
- team teaching, block scheduling
- conditioning routine for boxing
- spelling bee
- learning stations

The impression becomes firm; there is variety in instructional strategies but very few examples emerged which could not be found in the elementary or high school. A panelist notes: "Perhaps the most used instructional technique was textbook reading and worksheet or chalkboard response." He goes on to comment:

> However, within a single lesson in a particular class, only one or possibly two techniques would be employed to teach the particular concept. For example, if a movie was shown, little discussion or follow-up work sheets were used. Apparently, a unit would employ various instructional techniques but only to teach to one level - not to meet varied learning needs.

Another panelist offers this rationale for the sameness of strategies: "In our need to report to parents, we seem to find it necessary to evaluate student progress based on a written test which can be produced if necessary. There are many side-learnings that are developed that cannot and are not measured by objective tests." The panelist then argues that unless alternative evaluation procedures are devised, we cannot hope to create unique middle schools let alone present them intelligently to parents.

To assign a value to observations about the richness and variety of instructional strategies would be hard in a limited study conducted on a particular day. Some 700 classes were in the sample, however, and a reader has the nagging feeling that strategies were okay, not super, and not particularly reflective of the best we know about kids. The major high mark lies in the use of open classrooms and the freedom of movement which occurred whenever small group-individualized instruction was the mode.

2. *Varied instructional materials.* The target school reports give evidence of the variety of instructional materials in use. The critical question is the degree to which variety and accommodation to the range of learning needs are present. Although a day's examination of schooling is not sufficient to inventory either the variety or modality of the instructional materials, observers made many notations about what they saw in use that bleak February 17th.

In a business education class, for example, students were active with typewriters and adding machines. Science classes for the most part seemed well equipped with the tools for experimentation. Yet in physical education, many students had to wait their turn to shoot baskets, not for lack of baskets, but balls. Libraries were widely used by the seventh graders - in some instances the entire class looked for appropriate materials, but more often small groups or individuals searched out reading or reference materials. In the enrichment areas of music, art, industrial arts, and home economics appropriate materials were available. Yet in all these instances, conditions were only what we should expect.

In approximately one-third of the schools, students were sectioned into reading classes, either for remediation or developmental activities. There appeared to be adequate materials for both programs. In a science class students first observed the teacher run an experiment about static electricity using a Van DeGraff generator, after which students participated. It may be inferred from some of the assignments that materials were selected to engage the curiosity of the transescent. In a class where students were reporting on their ancestors, family lore of one kind or another was a resource. Such an assignment was timely, coming about while *Roots* was a popular novel; also there is a relationship to the early adolescent's search for identity.

While the majority of our 700 classes were teacher dominated with the instructor presenting material, many different aides were used to help carry the information - TV, slides-tapes, overheads, charts, filmstrips, experimental equipment, and other media resources. A panelist wrote that when students had "interaction with media used for learning students were more interested in outcomes." We hope that teachers will increasingly take the next step to have students share information they have processed through a variety of instructional materials.

One panelist described instructional materials usage in the Shadow Studies he analyzed in these words:

> A single textbook approach to learning was by far the most popular method. However, there were a few exceptions: "They were working in three different textbooks, but all were studying decimals." . . .

> "Teacher assigned one regular textbook to all students but other textbooks were used and left in the room." Some classrooms used supplemental resources to the textbook such as science newspapers, workbooks, and worksheets. For the most part, teachers seemed to depend on one teaching technique and would use one particular type of teaching material, then individualize by going from student to student to help answer their questions on the information and assignments.

The panelist also noted:

> "She (student) says that in most of her classes she simply reads assignments, answers questions, and takes tests." This type of teaching may not be the most favored technique by teachers, but in many instances it is the easiest and most efficient way to deal with content.

Lest we judge the picture as bleak, a panelist noted this about the lack of mention of instructional materials variety in the Shadow Studies: "I was concerned that no more mention of this was made than the few comments it received. I must remind myself, however, that observers were not asked to look for these items, and perhaps it just wasn't mentioned even though it was present. Let us hope so; otherwise the middle school is falling short of its potential."

3. *Individualization of instruction.* Perhaps no term in the educational lexicon is open to more interpretations or used more loosely in describing classroom interactions. The indicator to be applied to Shadow Study evidence specifies individualization of instruction in particular aspects: assignments, activities, procedures, size of groups, not all to be present at one instance, however.

For many teachers and administrators, "individualization" is synonymous with self-pacing and a varied time frame for most students to do the same thing. Another approach stresses group differentiation of assignments, everyone in a group dealing with the same learning. "Individualization" occurs when each student is programmed to have his own version of the material to be learned, either in a text, workbook, programmed instruction, or other print resources. Some educators define "individualization" as personalized learning, encouraging the student to learn about the topic through one modality or another and from a different perspective.

In one English class students viewed "Beauty and the Beast" followed by time for project work relating to the film. Boys worked alone while the girls were directed by the teacher. S. had the jitters as do others. Teacher: "You have 10 minutes and the rest you have to do at home." The teacher then stopped class activities: "You still have not learned to work on your own without a teacher." Ponder this teacher's idea of individualization during the entire episode.

Another class utilized groups to cover the same questions on a booklet entitled Interpreting Statistics. The "individualization" seemed to center on the use of four groups and their work sites in two different rooms. In an ISCS class "there were many individualized things going on. Some students were working on experiments, others were reading, and others were writing. The teacher was sitting at his desk giving individual help with problems the students brought to him." ISCS places a premium upon discovery and self-pacing although the material is approximately the same for all students.

For many middle school programs, "individualized" instruction means work-

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ing alone, in others it means learning situations. At one J. watches a film strip and engages in discussions and answering questions. The observer notes: "good example of individualized study and learning. Teacher is primarily a resource person." In the same school students are grouped to read novels, each group has a different novel. Certainly use of such groups is manageable for the teacher and provides greater variety of insight into the novel.

The panelists saw specific characteristics in schools as they evaluated evidence of individualization. "Varying group sizes was a dominant practice throughout the study." "In some cases, however, there was still present the Friday test for everyone covering the same material." Another panelist wrote:

> One of the obvious differences in the various schools and even the classes was the group size and chair arrangement. Some groups were as large as forty students in a traditional classroom. Other groups officially convened with ten students. Open space . . . the entire class is sitting in a circle on the floor working on a language arts exercise . . . There was only sporadic mention of varied assignments, activities, and procedures. They would be the exception, rather than the rule, to classroom curriculum.

Teacher movement was picked by one panelist as the mark of individualization. The same panelist noted: "Students are allowed to go beyond required material - a delightful exception." Another panelist observed "that with the exception of the science program, little diversity in instructional strategies existed."

In summary, then, "individualization" in the 100 middle schools seem to center upon varied group sizes, differentiated group assignments and self-pacing progression. While middle schools have made significant progress toward breaking the lockstep advancement of students through the same content, there remains for further development the broad area of learning via different activities and from the rich knowledge resource bases which together can produce divergent learning and creative problem solving. The middle school, because of its freshness and growth potential, has the capacity to break through to that quality of individualization.

4. *Block scheduling, team teaching, core program arrangements.* These are commonly touted as hallmarks of good middle school programs. Admittedly, there are times when a team organization is forced because the building has pods or it was assumed that teacher strengths could be more effectively deployed by some kind of joint teaching endeavor. But in the main, one finds in the alternatives to the consecutive 45-50 minute period distinct efforts toward individualization of instruction.

On the national scene an increase in block scheduling arrangements has been reported and in the target middle schools some form of block scheduling was employed in two thirds of the cases.

The teacher analysts made some interesting observations to support the variations of class arrangement. It should be noted, however, that the line between "instructional stategy" and the class organization or school day layout is often blurred. There was "independent study in English" and "block scheduling is used." The "research class is independently geared." Another analyst found these conditions:

-"lecture room seating 100 kids in auditorium"
-"a total of 175 students are grouped together with 5 teachers; delivery model is departmental"

- "math lab-60 students-large area-two teachers-highly individualized. Youngsters working at skill level in folders, non-graded, 6, 7, and 8th grade students learning centers; resources available in classroom"
- "original community area. Tables only. Area contains 10 learning centers. Individual projects as well as group."

The analyst making these comments concluded that when there is evidence of good planning, large groups can receive instruction, and even more strongly emphasized that "content is enhanced by specialized grouping."

Another analyst found that in most of the school reports he read, there was some form of block scheduling for either team teaching or departmentalization. A reporter noted: "One can readily see that team teaching is a positive step in promoting total understanding on the part of the staff for the needs of the individual. Such cooperative effort is student-centered and is indeed conducive to meeting the needs of the emerging adolescent." A rather strong conclusion! Another analyst pointed out that careful planning and training are needed to best use the team teaching concept.

Turning to the reporter data, this interesting comment illustrates a danger of equating class arrangement with individualization:

> Certainly this visit pointed out that our schools should have a curriculum that grows out of student interests and needs and that our students should play a larger role in planning their activities. No doubt, the professional staff members were conducting effective "schooling" activities. Nevertheless, the principal was quite candid when he stated that there were few examples of "real individualized instruction."

Once more the reporter speaks: "She (the student) liked the mini-course idea because of the chances provided to do 'other things', choir in her case. A student summed up her opinion of the school in this fashion: "open classrooms are better than 'enclosed' ones." Yet another reporter characterized the school he visited in this fashion: "Due to a schedule created for administrative convenience, the student had absolutely no time to himself (no time to do what he wanted to do) during the day." And continuing, "no provision for exploration of an individual student interest except in limited elective offerings."

Evidence of the core concept of integrating subjects to solve problems did not often appear in the school reports. One observer noted that "teacher reminded students that part of the ecology assignment given by the reading teacher is for social studies." Another positive reflection stressed planning: "This team planning tied terms, concepts and knowledge together across academic lines and served to reinforce the learning in each specific area." The reporter felt that students recognized and appreciated this integration.

The middle schools of America, as sampled on that February day, do offer some variety of schedule; but the use of subject matter as resource data rather than course content was not obvious to observers.

5. *Action oriented teaching:* To describe individualized and personalized instruction the terms *action oriented, manipulative, student generated, and a nondidactic mode* are appropriate. The break from the review, read, recite, syndrome should be clear, for action oriented teachers would be designing assignments and

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tasks that would maximize student abilities. When we speak of learning modalities we expect to see instruction attuned to the different drummer each student hears. The classroom would contain learning centers calling for a variety of responses and response media. There would be flexible groups and schedules. The teacher would be the "senior" member of the group with the role of advisor or facilitator. There would be times, of course, for direct teaching to the whole class or segments of it. No one pattern would dominate; however, change would be directed by need rather than tradition.

What did the reporters and analysts see? One analyst wisely offered this caution in interpreting the data:

> Some clarification needs to be given as to what is a typical classroom. In my standards it would be a lively, exciting center of activities in which kids are involved in a variety of activities . . . Many times I found the typical classroom referring to a situation of 5 rows with 6 desks in each row and a barren room.

The obvious classes were action oriented - physical education, shop, music, labs. The analyst noted, however, "For the most part classes seemed traditional . . . teacher checking homework, class assigned to read chapters 6-13! Teacher will be checking individual notebooks. 'Test next week to cover the novel.' This approach contributed to observer boredom in several instances not to mention the kids' reactions."

An observer noted also: "In many classes the material was teacher centered, with the presenter teacher lecturing, while the student was the absorber, not the doer. Many classes were boring and repetitious. I'm glad I'm not a seventh grader."

But there was action and change also. One teacher in reviewing the previous day's lesson by question and answer utilized the overhead to show questions to entire class. A counselor described the student shadowed as engaged in normal horseplay before classes began, but once the work started, all students seemed very interested in what was going on. One reporter described the day as a nice balance between teacher directed and individualized instruction. Another reporter was impressed with the variety of learning experiences the shadowed student encountered and used these words: "Although her day was a busy one and most of her classrooms were structured, she had the opportunity to move around and talk quietly about her learning experiences in seven out of eight classes."

Generally, it would be fair to say that the middle school classes contained in this study lacked variety and self-learning opportunities. One language arts class consisted of forty minutes of question-answer. And another scene: "The teacher asks the boy who is helping Ricky to sit in his own seat, telling both boys that the work counts only if Ricky does it himself. Then a game is introduced - mental arithmetic -no talking is allowed - the reward is gum." In a history class the teacher explained subject matter for thirty minutes!

A Shadow Study summary concluded: "Most of the student's day was spent listening, reading, writing, and studying. Very little time was devoted to oral communication and discussion. This student would have benefited from such involvement."

The data are ambivalent. Roughly half the Shadow Studies reported a sameness to the instructional flow. The question-answer format dominated the major subject areas. In one instance the teacher spoke to the backs of her students' heads for the entire period! But there were the turned-on classes with lots of student participation, direction, and testing of their creative learning habits. A thoughtful recorder may have isolated the essence of the middle school day:

> With seven classes daily a student must be flexible enough to change classes and subject every 48 minutes while also being expected to be an active participant in each class . . . By the end of the day W. was very enthusiastic about his final class of the day and expressed this to me when I questioned him. It seemed that for W. each period was long enough to gain his interest in the subject, but not long enough for him to become bored.

Student flexibility may be our greatest success factor in the middle school.

C. *RELATIONSHIP INTERACTIONS* designed to strengthen the adolescent's social and self-awareness.

Relationship interactions play a major role in the middle school program rationale. The transescent is on the threshold of becoming his adult self and the period of time he spends in the middle school is largely one of testing out those patterns of behavior and beliefs which will become hallmarks of his adult character. Because the transescent is both challenged by his peers and by the adult world of which he is a part, there is the need for interaction with contemporaries and the adults who mold the structures of his environment.

What then does the middle school implant in its operations that will facilitate youth having the quality of contact with peers and adults which will enable growth directions to be tested out and raised to a higher level of development? Two areas stand out in the middle school conceptualization: opportunities for socialization and opportunities to develop new relationships with adults. These new adult relationships transcend the typical student-teacher interaction. What is required is a student-adult relationship in which the youth is able to talk out his concerns and explore options without being told he is ridiculous. Of course the teacher should provide this quality of relationship and often does; but it is difficult for one teacher to be that needed adult to 25 to 35 students in a single class period, yet along the larger number which may be encountered daily.

The guidance component in the middle school seeks to establish an outreach relationship with students. This advisor-advisee type of relationship may reside in a classroom teacher, a homeroom teacher, or a counselor. The important condition is that opportunity for relationships of the kind we have been describing be available to youth in our middle schools. What does the record of February 17th tell us?

1. *Advisor-advisee relationship.* Activities in this area were not evident in the Shadow Studies. One teacher analyst flatly stated that "student-faculty relationships were not mentioned directly." Another analyst noted that the homeroom organization was very weak. The time spent dealt with work period for the students or for announcements and directions from the teacher. It seemed that the degeneration of the homeroom into a study ahll atmosphere most often occurred when the homeroom became the first period instructional class or was the location for later instruction. Students logically used the time to get "one up" on their assignments. Yet

another analyst reported that his shadow studies showed evidence of students having access to a person or persons to whom they could go for help. Time for group guidance and counseling activities existed in the majority of middle schools sampled, but apparently on Shadow Study Day that time was not used for such activities.

In a school which began its day with an Advisory Group period, a time which was also repeated at noon, the shadowed student put the early time to use chatting about an upcoming intramural game; the later time he read a friend's homework paper and then a book during the USSR time (uninterrupted sustained silent reading). In another instance, the observer noted that teachers were in the classrooms and halls conversing with students. One student told the observer at the end of the day that "she particularly liked her guidance counselor who had helped her adjust following her mother's death." In a similar situation, a shadowed student praised her values clarification class which had focused on such topics as divorce of parents, which, for her, was a real problem.

One ought not generalize too much from 100 Shadow Studies; yet it is striking that observers did not pick up on provisions for advisor-advisee relationships that might stem from homeroom or group guidance activities. Students did have, and commented favorably upon, any number of adult-student relationships. These occurred, however, in the course of the school day's normal events.

2. *Social experiences and socialization processes.* This aspect ranks high in the rationale of middle school education, for the obvious reason that the transition for youth is heavily weighted in the area of making new adjustments to peers. Socialization does not mean "fun and games"; rather it means opportunities for conversational ease and the exchange of ideas between peers, especially those of the opposite sex. The school setting should nurture intellectual sharing. Nor should opportunities for friendships, discussions, and problem solving be solely among youth. A major thrust of the transescent's drive for adulthood is building new relationships with adults - relationships of the quality which will permeate adulthood.

The school is not without responsibility for social experiences beyond the school day or setting. Youth need opportunities to mingle at social sports, cultural events, both as spectators and performers. The need for social experiences is especially critical in isolated communities or in locations where travel to events is curtailed by distance or the hazards of big city life.

The events of 100 seventh graders on February 17th provided a cross sectional view of the middle school commitment to the goal of socialization. One analyst summed up attention to socialization in the classroom with this opinion, . . . the schools appeared to be tolerant of the socialization (in the classrooms), but did not 'teach' to it."

All observers reported conversations among students whenever these were occurring in notations such as these: "soft conversation among students as they work", "talking with neighbors as both are working on her horn's valve which seems inoperative", "S. talks to a boy . . . helps him with a problem", "students interacted very well with 'poet in residence' and appeared highly motivated". "The social games of the transescent student were very obvious."

Some observers found the socialization climate restrictive, however. In one school the analyst concluded: "Such controls as 'be quiet or detention' and a 'v-e-ry' structured math class hinder positive interaction in our estimation." And at another school the analyst cited: "This particular school appeared to us to be teacher-centered with lunch and activity period the only times for students to interact. There was no evidence of teacher-student interaction.

Thus the general tone among the schools was positive in that the classroom setting provided occasion for "small talk" among students and for "work talk" as well. Social skills, such as dancing, were strengthened in physical education. In the classroom, teachers utilized group work to ease into socialization situations. We may infer, therefore, that teachers understood the transescent's drive for peer contacts and did not create large barriers to interactions. The major negative feature appeared in several lunchrooms where students were assigned seats or sections - a condition which reduced socialization and their own independence.

An observer made this significant comment: "Only one incident of boredom surfaced. This occurred during her mathematics class which was conducted by a substitute teacher. This class was also somewhat different in that there were four or five friends in this class who were not in any other class with her. Their presence seemed to alter her behavior." The socialization process, then, is a factor of several ingredients - peers, activities, climate, the teacher. For a middle school to strengthen the processes and opportunities for socialization, the mix of influencing ingredients must be carefully examined. Above all, we should not minimize the coping skills of students, their abilities to deal with teachers and the administrative structures in their school. "There were varied classroom situations and teacher types, but D. adjusted to each situation and its expectations without much problem." An analyst summed up the resiliency of the seventh grader: "I found very few kids that felt left out or extremely concerned about their relationships with their peers."

3. *Open-student faculty relationship.* This aspect extends the dimensions of the socialization climate that is so vital to the transescent's move into adulthood. If children are to become adults, they require role models which challenge them and demonstrate good ways of living. Teachers are role models of a commitment to intellectual and social concerns and, as such, opportunities for close student-teacher interaction should abound. But do they? In essence interactions occur at two levels - one is the natural flow of classroom activities, the manner in which the teacher directs the action, the voice and posture which convey to students whether it is "okay" to take risks, to venture ideas, to demonstrate some independence. A second level touches the more personal contacts, the teacher-as-friend and guiding adult. Both levels of relationship, in various degrees of desirability, are found in the middle schools of this study.

One analyst commented: "Teacher has good management and rapport with her students", and "Teacher has allowed all students in the class to respond." "Teacher has gentle control." "Teacher participates in most of the activities helping individuals when needed." These notations, all coming from different schools, describe the quality of teaching interactions which foster intellectual and personal growth in the learning setting.

Another analyst includes this series of comments:

> Finally, subtle comments about student-teacher relationships were often made. 'Wish I could describe the intangibles that this teacher possesses that

> seem to make me feel good about her general relationship with the kids. Accessible, genuinely interested in the individual, listens well. Students kid the teacher.'
>
> A button on a teacher which read: THIS TEACHER REALLY CARES.
>
> These kids require a patient and understanding person who accepts them for what they are and helps them strive to be better. However, there is no formula for this teacher. I am more convinced than ever, that he can teach in any area of this country, in any type of classroom, with any kind of curriculum, in any sort of facility. Wherever he is, kids know he is someone special because he believes in them; they believe in each other. This bond is the fiber of a good middle school.

Time and again analysts and observers commented that teachers made the difference in the quality of instruction. In the post-observation interviews, students commented with high frequency that what they liked about the school was the teachers! Some students included the principal and the lunchroom ladies in the most liked category!

The step to teacher-as-friend and guiding adult is not large, but the number of times teachers in the study were described in this role was not large.

One observer did note: "The rapport between teachers and students was a beautiful thing . . . There was a comfortable air of rapport, yet an evident respect for and to one another . . . It was evident that each one was happy and proud to be a part of their middle school." And another comment: "Well before school starts many teachers are in classrooms and halls conversing with students and each other." An even stronger statement appeared in the analyst's summation: "Nowhere did I see the relationship exist between students and teachers that would be considered unhealthy."

Can we conclude from these comments and others in the Shadow Studies that teachers are in fact functioning as friend and adult guide to transescents? A tentative "yes" seems in order although the notes of the day do not specifically use that language. We are on safer ground in concluding that teachers have developed good relationships with their students. The proof lies in the many times that students praised the attitudes and actions of their teachers.

A SUMMING UP

On the basis of this study, what is to be said of middle school education? What generalizations have taken form from the accounts of one hundred observers and the analyses of the teachers on the panel? Each reader of the accounts would likely conclude a few degrees apart. It is hoped, however, that the interpretations of the authors in this summary will be fairly represented of reality and thereby help us all in our quest for a more effective middle school program.

The Instructional Program. There were many exciting activities occurring on February 17th; however, the "sameness' of the instructional program was still the dominant mood. One observer caught that mood:

> My general reaction to the school day was that it was long . . . the length and repetitiveness of the day made a very strong impression . . . I could only conclude that my fatigue resulted from the similarity of classes and the

> general orderliness of a young peron's time during the school day . . . I looked forward to lunch period and would have been delighted if an assembly program had been scheduled.

An analyst put his finger on what may well be the reason for student disinterest in the instructional program . ". . . it seems that as middle school educators we still have a long way to go to make our teaching more relevant for the needs and learning styles of our students . . ." It is clear to us, as authors, that the major gap in middle school education relates to curriculum relevancy.

Instructional strategies and materials. Although the curriculum of the middle school appears to be little more than a brightened up extension of the more traditional fare of the junior high school, the strategies and materials employed do seem to be undergoing modification. This is needed, for as one analyst pointed out:

> Difficult as it is we need to continue to provide for individual differences in students by presenting a variety of learning activities and types as well as speeds for individual students...we must continually question ourselves as to our objectives and methods in the curriculum and strategies we are using with our students . . . Overall, I was very pleased with what is happening in our nation's middle schools — however, I feel that there is still room for more to happen to enable students to grow and become better able to understand themselves and the world around them.

Teachers need to take heart as they move toward relating individual needs to instructional modes. We seem currently obsessed with "staying on task"; the catch is that the "task" is too often that of the teacher's creation. Help in reaching each child will be found in determining his goals and needs and weaving them into a task which becomes "his" and ultimately "ours." Children are readily doing this, as one observer noted; "The most striking feature of the whole experience was the intense level of involvement she maintained throughout the day, albeit that involvement was not always on (the teacher's) task."

Relationship Interactions. A note of pessimism pervaded many positive reactions in this area. One observer reported in this fashion: "The middle school was devised so that the educational needs, wants, and desires of transescents could be better met than was possible in the junior high school. Unfortunately, the middle school, though it has come far to try to fit the school to its students, still has far to go." Yet students were almost unanimous in telling their observers that they liked their teachers, they were "neat." The rapport between students and teachers was found to be good. What was not evident, was the translation of that rapport into curriculum content and instructional strategies which foster independence of thought, sensitivity to learning styles, and a true sense of teacher and student learning together both to comprehend the world and create a better one.

The mood of the day was hopeful, highlighted with some innovations, reflective of a better understanding of youth than we have ever had, and revealing of enough peak experiences to conclude that the middle school movement is aware of what it can become and is headed in that direction. An analyst opined:

> Middle schools today are experimenting with various instructional programs, strategies, materials, and teaching techniques in order to try to teach children most effectively. Within these schools, individuals are having their

successes and failures — both as students and teachers. However, an ideal can not be bought and packaged; it must be worked for, and every middle school I analyzed gave indication of *trying* to do something that was good for kids.

On February 17, we looked at our students and, through what was done to and with them, at ourselves. We noted strengths and weaknesses. With rare exception, it was evident that where there were problems, "we" were the problems. It was not the school facility, the lack of materials, or even the departmentalized curriculum that was the prime villian. Pogo was on target when he philosophized: "We have met the enemy, and he is us." But, on the other hand, it was also equally evident that where there were successes, "we" were the successes it was not the innovation, the organizational structure, or the new building that spelled success, it was the person of the teacher who was effective in relating and communicating. We, who may often be the enemy, are also really the only possible conquerors.

A COMPARISON BETWEEN THE 1962 SHADOW STUDY AND THE 1977 STUDY

A comparison between the 1962 Shadow Study of eighth graders and the 1977 Shadow Study of seventh graders is inevitable and unavoidable. Although readily acknowledging the real limitations that do exist and being fully cautious because of the presence of so many "ifs, ands, and buts," the authors, nevertheless, feel compelled to state frankly their judgments. Since two of the authors of this report also wrote the previous shadow study report, perhaps we are justified in venturing, however hesitantly, some comparisons.

The key question then, becomes, "Are the educational experiences being provided early adolescents in America now more attuned to the needs of transescents than they were fifteen years earlier?" Based on the seventh grade shadow studies of 1977 in comparison with the eighth grade studies of 1962, we conclude that they are.

Readers familiar with the 1964 Shadow Study report will recall the rather discouraging picture contained in that report. Although there were many bright spots and the youngsters were almost always positive defenders of their schools, the overall evaluation was essentially negative. Some of the major conclusions from the earlier study were as follows:

> "In summary, the 102 Shadow Studies, while pointing to much inspired teaching and apparent concern for the best in learning theory, seem more accurately summarized by this closing statement of one observer.
>
> "To sum it up: I would not want to be an eighth grader . . .
>
> —on such a tight daily schedule;
>
> —when I was not involved in planning what was to be done and/or how this would be done;
>
> —where most teachers lectured and treated us as sponges;

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> —where my interests and needs were not considered in planning the curriculum;
>
> —where I could 'get by' very nicely just by being quiet, orderly, and following directions;
>
> —where my learning was bookish, fragmentized, and purposes were not clear;
>
> —where I had no opportunities for 'me' to grow.'
>
> "This was the predominant, but not universal, view of the junior high school we saw on May 3, 1962.". . . .
>
> "The most prominent impression is of a classroom dominated by the teacher, in full direction of the learning complex. Lecturing was common and appeared in classes ranging from English to art.". . . .
>
> "In other instances, the teacher performed a four-step procedure; (a) collecting homework papers, (b) going over homework, (c) making the next assignment and/or introducing new work, and (d) allocating time for starting the homework in class.". . . .
>
> "The data gathered from the Shadow Studies seem to cast the junior high school classroom as a miniature lecture hall inhabited by a central figure of authority and his helpless captives. It does seem almost indisputably evident that the typical eighth grade situation is teacher dominated with pupils rather passive and actively involved only to a limited degree; physically present, but psychologically absent a large portion of the time.". . . . (Lounsbury and Marani, 1964).

The overall picture in 1977, in our judgment, was clearly improved - not excellent, perhaps not even very good, but noticeably better. The middle school today, as one would expect, is still very much a mixed bag. There are hundreds of middle schools operating that are wholly departmentalized, homogeneously grouped, subject matter centered, and featuring interscholastic athletics. These schools display nearly all that typified what became the typical junior high school. On the other hand, there are many middle schools that operate in open spaces, that feature real team teaching, extensive exploratory programs, adviser-advisee arrangements, and nearly all the theoretically acceptable practices. The vast majority, of course, are somewhere in-between and cluster around the middle. In reading the recent Shadow Studies one clearly gets the feeling that middle schools are moving; they are trying conscientiously to be responsive to student needs and to alter their programs and practices to serve better their emerging adolescents.

The major differences between 1962 and 1977 may be in climate rather than curriculum, in the atmosphere more than the course of study. We believe that some of the "objective" surveys of practices which seemed to reveal no significant difference between junior high schools and middle schools may not have been able to take into account differences that did exist in climate, relationships, and goals.

There is danger, of course, in generalizing too much, for many examples can be found to support almost any position along the continuum; yet there are some generalizations which the authors feel can be made fairly, however unscientifically. We believe, in toto, the Shadow Studies, if they are representative of middle schools in action, reflect the following pluses and minuses;

Some pluses

- the apparent teacher-student interaction and relationships typically found could be characterized as positive or good.
- exploratory programs were usually in operation.
- considerable use of individualized work and assignments was evident.
- limited use of the lecture to a total class and frequent utilization of varied activities within a single period were noted.
- block scheduling was common.
- some form of team organization was quite typical.
- flexibility in space usage was evident, variety in seating patterns and size of groups was common.
- an emphasis on evaluation rather than simply on testing was manifested.
- some efforts to utilize content related to the problems of transescents were evident.

Some minuses

- few examples of real adviser-advisee programs surfaced.
- limited use of, and involvement of, the community as an educational resource was found.
- the continued use of the departmental subject structure, even in team situations, was obvious.
- limited level of participation in intramural programs was noted.
- apparently inadequate attention to the field of health and physical education, other than as an activity, seemed clear.

Not one of the above "pluses" could have been set forth as a generalization based on the 1962 Shadow Studies. All in all, the Shadow Studies of 1977 when compared with those of 1962 should give heart to the professionals who labor in the vineyard which encompasses the middle school years. The commitment, caring, and character of middle school educators *is* making a difference.

References

Lounsbury, John H. and Marani, Jean V., *The Junior High School We Saw: One Day in the Eighth Grade*, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1964, pp. 51, 54.

6 THE ROAD AHEAD

Many educators applaud the lack of a "standard" middle school, feeling there is strength in remaining "in process," viable, and dynamic. Once the middle school becomes institutionalized it may cease significant programmatic growth, they claim. There is much to be said for this view; yet unless there is some sort of a target held up, how can one even aim in the right direction, let alone hit the bull's eye? As the Shadow Studies and other earlier research reports make evident, there are many, many middle schools operating all too contentedly, believing that because they are called middle schools and enroll grades five or six through eight they are "innovative."

Surrounding the middle school movement today is genuine excitement, professional commitment, real caring, a recognition of the centrality of kids—in short all the earmarks of a forward looking, action oriented educational movement. Middle school people generally are not "standpatters" who would be satisfied with mere administrative arrangements, or who would be content to perpetuate the practices which the junior high school unfortunately came to represent. They stand for something; they seek to implement programs which reflect their awareness of, and respect for, the nature and needs of emerging adolescents. There *do* exist clear images of a theoretically proper middle school. Perhaps it would be well, then, in this concluding chapter to paint such a school in broad strokes, as an unfinished portrait, yet one with definite form and substance. The reality of the middle school movement as the 1970's wound down and the eighties got underway gives one encouragement. Progress has been made, and the shadow studies document this. Yet the obviousness of the age old gap between theory and practice is painfully apparent, and the shadow studies likewise reinforce the existence of this wide chasm.

What ought a "good" middle school be like? What are the practices or characteristics that would set it apart from other educational institutions that might happen to enroll young people in the middle years? How do you tell a real middle school? The following twelve charactertistics generally parallel the indicators used by the teacher panel members as a basis for analysis. Speaking only as three individuals, though as ones who have been deeply involved in the movement for some period of time, we would venture that the following are the more significant characteristics of a real middle school - not the only ones, but the more critical ones. All of these features reflect the nature and needs of early adolescents. It is, of course, the middle school's ability to serve the diversity and development of these transescents which ought to be its sole justification as an entity. The movement must continue to seek conscientiously to build schools and instructional programs that reflect fully the nature of transescents. We offer these features as descriptors of that target which should be the aiming point of our educational efforts on the road ahead.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A "REAL" MIDDLE SCHOOL

1. **A developmental skill program that provides both separate and context teaching of reading and related communication skills for all pupils.** Growth in the basic skills is a responsibility of the middle grades; no one would argue this declaration. The skill program should include not just remedial work for those who are "deficient," but developmental and enrichment work for all. Some skills can now be introduced for the first time and able readers need to be assisted in becoming still better readers. Oral language and listening, which may be the most needed as well as the most neglected skills, must be major components of the program. Only when an entire faculty is committed to assisting youth grow in *all* the basic skills will a real middle school exist.

2. **A definite curriculum commitment to, and a plan for dealing with, the affective aspects of education.** A complete middle school will not leave to chance the matter of growth in the all-important, albeit nebulous, matters of attitudes, self-concepts, and personal values-the real determinants of behavior. The middle school years are the critical years in the development of an individual's philosophy of life, his social/civic ethics and moral sensibilities. The curriculum at the intermediate level cannot leave to chance the development of positive self-concepts. Many of the basic skills of coping, so important in today's world, are inherent in affective education. While not a program in and of itself, affective education must be fostered and supported not only by a schoolwide climate of concern and critical thinking but by definite plans for incorporating the affective in the formal school program.

3. **A clear recognition of the social needs of early adolescents through both in-class and out-of-class activities.** To early adolescents, the school is a social institution. It is the primary stage on which they act out their developing roles as social beings, young men and women in the making. The organized educational program should support and assist this socialization rather than suppress it, counter it, or try to restrict it to the time between classes. Small group activities in classes, for example, can assist that inevitable socialization process which is of such prime importance to transescents. One could proclaim, relative to the social interests of early adolescents, that old saw, "If you can't beat 'em, join 'em."

4. **An extensive program of enrichment, exploratory and interest classes or activities.** The exploratory component of the middle school curriculum should be a major one with a significant allotment of time—more than the equivalent of a single period a day. The program ought to include art, music, homemaking, and industrial arts, but not be limited to these basic areas. Short-term interest-centered mini-

courses, independent study opportunities, and other enrichment options are also needed to serve the creative needs and adventuresome inclinations of early adolescents. Variety, considerable student selection, informality of instruction, and non-competitive grading are desirable attributes for such a program.

5. **A comprehensive program of health and physical education.** The physical growth and maturation of early adolescents is obvious and marked. The resulting importance of body image to early adolescents is most understandable. A major educational program to assist transescents in understanding the nature of and varying rates of physical maturation clearly is an essential ingredient of a true middle school. Daily physical education activities that support and assist growth, together with planned instruction in health education that includes consideration of such topics as sex, alcohol, and drugs, is needed. Intramural activities to serve the competitive needs of both boys and girls should be provided as well. An inter-scholastic athletic program is neither desirable nor appropriate.

6. **A curriculum organization that clearly departs from the subject/class arrangement for a large portion of the day.** If a school serving transescents is fully departmentalized it is lacking, in our judgment, a fundamental feature. The deviation might be by interdisciplinary teaming, via a core program, or simply by block scheduling with correlation, but someway, somehow a middle school program should *not* be organized exclusively on a straight subject/class arrangement if it is to serve emerging adolescents effectively. The curriculum should address the personal-social needs of youth and these needs should be the organizing force for selecting appropriate subject matter. For example, a unit on career options would draw content from all the basic subject areas. It is exciting for youth to discover that subject areas *are* relevant to everyday problems.

7. **An activity/laboratory approach utilized for most instruction as opposed to a presentation/telling approach.** If the predominate method of instruction is one which reflects teaching as telling and casts learners as passive receivers of instruction a real middle school does not exist. On the other hand, as classrooms become laboratories featuring activities and action rather than lecture halls where the lesson is presented, the advocacy of middle school education becomes operative. Middle schools should employ varied size groups as instructional units, ranging from a single individual to a house or team of more than one hundred. In these groups there is a definite place for direct instruction, to be sure, but it should be seen as one of several approaches to teaching.

8. **Considerable utilization of readily available and varied instructional materials.** A middle school should be "built around" a media center which includes print and non-print media of all sorts. Such a learning resource center or library should operate in a manner that facilitates the easy selection and distribution of its many resources to students and faculty. The diversity of middle school students, their far-reaching exploratory needs, and the wide range of their abilities make necessary abundant and varied instructional materials which easily can be made available in an always-open setting.

9. **A developmental guidance program built on the classroom teacher in an adviser-advisee program but providing intensive and specialized assistance for any who need help in discovering their aptitudes and interests, maturing in their social**

relationships, or otherwise growing up appropriately. Both teacher-counselors and guidance specialists are needed to serve youth in this major period of growth and development. Also needed is time for such persons to fulfill their guidance responsibilities. The opportunity for group consideration of social and personal problems is an important part of the guidance responsibilities of a middle school. An administrative homeroom and a central office counselor simply are inadequate for a school serving the middle school years. Each middle school student needs to have one adult who knows him or her fully and who has both the reason and the opportunity to express caring and to render support and assistance.

10. **Utilization of the community as an educational resource.** New understandings of cause and effect and the concept of community and the world, coupled with the seemingly inherent bent toward humanitarianism that is evident among transescents call for a middle school to relate closely to its community. Involvement in community affairs, particularly in some participatory manner, is a mark of a real middle school. The community should be seen as a resource to explore, a place in which to apprentice, not just as a source for an occasional resource person.

11. **A comprehensive program of evaluation and reporting to parents.** Such a program of evaluation should provide data on the growth and development of individuals in comparison with their abilities and past performance in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. The typical nine-week normative evaluation in academic areas, with perhaps a passing note regarding behavior, is not an adequate program of evaluation and reporting for the middle school years.

Communication with parents needs to be two-way, for only as parents are partners can a fully effective middle school program be implemented. Increasingly, middle school are developing activities which inform and, more importantly, involve parents.

12. **A school-wide atmosphere of teacher-teacher, teacher-student, and student-student** cooperation. A genuine caring and concern for people will be evident in a real middle school. A tension-free emotional climate is needed to support properly the positive growth of early adolescents in the social, emotional, physical, and intellectual areas.

CONCLUSION

The foregoing characteristics or conditions are merely *a* list, just opinion. They are offered, however, to help set the design of a target that does need to be held up, however tentatively. At this time, when school boards and administrators are establishing middle schools for varied, and even devious, reasons, it is important to have some suggested standards. When junior high schools are changing their names but little else; when school systems think they are making progress just by administratively organizing a middle school; when the Shadow Study Project clearly points out that there is much room for improvement, surely we need not fear standardization by proposing some bases on which one can determine which middle schools are real middle schools.

The typical middle school is not what it ought to be, but it is moving in the right direction. These Shadow Studies present a mixed picture—lots of routine, typical classrooms—teacher directed, subject matter centered—but also lots of conscientious efforts at open, individualized education, many examples of positive student-teacher relationships.

We who hold positions in the movement must capture the moment, seize the opportunity that is ours to make a difference in American education, and exploit it fully. The decade of the eighties will be the critical decade for the middle school movement. There is good reason to believe that the movement is the major, positive educational effort today. But it could fizzle out, become reduced to organizational and administrative minutia. The fork in the road is just ahead; the path to be taken not yet determined. What we who claim a place in the middle school movement do, individually and collectively, in the immediate future will decide the direction. For the sake of America's emerging adolescents, we must choose the high road.

APPENDICES

A THE SHADOW STUDY TECHNIQUE

Too frequently the sole criterion for evaluating the effectiveness of classroom situations or school programs is the public performance of the teachers. It is assumed that dynamic, well organized, and articulate teachers will assure a good learning situation for all the students. While this statement contains much truth, it also carries an assumption that is not true. The assumption is that a teacher teaches a class. But a class does not have a mind; a class does not learn. Only individuals learn. Classes are merely administrative arrangements that group individuals in manageable components. To assess effectiveness, individuals must be examined.

The shadow study technique is a means by which one can gain a new perspective on the teaching-learning complex, a perspective that is centered on the individual consumer rather than on the figure at the front of the room. Shadow studies permit one to get a picture of the real curriculum, the one from the viewpoint of the individual learner. And focusing on the learners, not on the teachers, is a very revealing approach. Watching teachers perform all day long gives one picture, watching *a* learner all day long is likely to give a somewhat different picture. The latter picture, we submit, is really the more valid one.

The teacher herself finds it difficult to conceptualize adequately a school day from the viewpoint of the student. When a teacher conducts a shadow study she gaines a perspective not achievable any other way - and she inevitably does a great deal of personal introspection that is helpful.

Curriculum improvement does not occur in a vacuum, nor does it take place via the printed word or administrative memorandum. It involves people and, to be successful, it must alter those persons, their perceptions and beliefs. Curriculum change will occur when, and only when, teachers want it to occur. Hence efforts to bring about educational change have to utilize procedures that will bring teachers actively and fully into the act. The shadow study technique is one such procedure and we commend it to others as worthy of utilization. In-service programs and staff development projects always need ways to achieve their desirable but elusive goals. Conducting a group of shadow studies in a particular school will provide rich data for faculty consideration.

As a means of gathering case study data, the shadow study procedure has real merit. Observing the individual's relationship with pupils and teachers throughout a day will make evident important characteristics and traits that can lead to desired behavior changes.

The shadow study research technique is classified as a "naturalistic" method of gathering data. (Toepfer and Marani, 1980) This means that the data are gathered by direct observation in the subject's natural habitat as opposed to a contrived and controlled environment. It has been used primarily by sociologists, but educators have increasingly seen its merit. Following the publication of the 1964 ASCD

Shadow Study many colleges incorporated the technique in their pre-service programs. Most frequently, it becomes a requirement during the student teaching experience where it serves to broaden the understandings of fledgling teachers.

Although not asked to react to the process of the study, many observers volunteered comments regarding the value of the activity, as did the participants in the 1962 study. The following are a few samples of such statements:

"I was astounded by the length of the day, a length never apparent before."

"This study gave me a chance to experience some of the tensions and anxieties encountered daily by a middle school student."

"It was a revealing experience, every teacher should do this periodically."

"The shadow study project allowed me an opportunity to get into the mainstream of academic concepts and procedures. It allowed me an opportunity to make a time and initiative study of this group and observe the reactions in peer groups, social and educational relationships."

While the "rules" for conducting a shadow study are not officially established or formalized, the Shadow Studies conducted in 1962 and 1977 used the same format and procedures. They are quite simple and logical.

The term "shadow study," of course, is an outgrowth of the procedure of shadowing, or following closely, a student. It is not as secretive as might be assumed by the emotional tone of the word "shadow," but, on the other hand, the student being observed should not realize, initially at least, that he or she is the subject. The observing and recording should be as unobtrusive as possible. In most schools, visitors are common enough that the presence of an outsider creates little special notice.

The student to be shadowed should be selected by some random method such as a blind pick, a numbered selection, or the first (or last) student with the same initial as the observer. The point is to avoid selecting, or having the administration select, a "good" student, one that might uncharacteristically cast the school in a favorable light.

The "Directions Given to Observers" are included as Appendix B and should be reviewed for additional details. The form utilized is presented as Appendix C.

The observer then shadows the selected pupil throughout the entire school day. Every ten minutes the behavior of the subject is recorded. The ten minute time interval for recording the behavior of the student lends a sense of objectivity to the study. It is surprising how readily the total picture is evident via these ten minute snapshots, particularly when supplemented by the description in the environment column. The focus of the study clearly is on what is happening to the individual student. Teacher behavior is recorded as a function of what impinges on the student, but it is not a prime subject of attention and analysis. In summary, the Shadow Study technique can be used for many educational purposes; it has been recommended by those who have used it; and it is simple to employ.

Reference

Toepfer, Conrad F., Jr., and Marani, Jean V. "School-based Research," Chapter 14 in *Toward Adolescence: The Middle School Years*, Seventy-ninth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I, Mauritz Johnson, editor, 1980 pp. 276-9.

B DIRECTIONS GIVEN TO OBSERVERS

TO: Shadow Study Volunteers
FROM: John H. Lounsbury, Coordinator, Steering Committee
RE: Middle School "Shadow Study" Research Project

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the National Middle School Association's Shadow Study Project. February 17 is S-Day for following a seventh grade student throughout the day and recording how it is to be a student in the middle school. You are one of over 100 observers who will be in the schools all across the country on that day. This study seeks to record a day's experience across the land for the seventh grade transescent. What happens to him, is he getting individual attention, what is he asked to learn, how does he react? There is a related question — how goes the middle school movement itself? While not wholly a scientific study, the data, recorded events and dialogue, will yield a slice of the middle school movement on February 17, 1977.

This letter is to outline the ground rules for the study in order that you may plan your observation. First, you are being asked to conduct the study *February 17*. Second, please be prepared to stay with the student from the beginning of the school day until the end.

We ask that you do not conduct the study in your own school unless it is unavoidable. We realize that this could easily create an unnatural environment. It is important, therefore, to make arrangements for the observation in advance. Most of you have already selected the particular school. If there are several schools from which you may choose, flip a coin or make a random selection in some other way.

We are focusing this study on those schools commonly called middle schools and encompassing a three-year grade span (6-8). Two year schools and those which extend more than three years are welcome, however, as long as grade seven is included. You can understand that schools limited to grades seven through nine, however, must be excluded because these are usually considered the junior high school years.

Student Selection

Certain procedures are suggested to insure randomness among students "shadowed". Select a seventh grader:

1. in the regular program, excluding exceptionalities
2. use one of the following methods to select him:
    - —reach in the seventh grade card file and draw out a name
    - —pick a student from those whose last name begins with the same letter as your name
    - —from a numbered roster, selecting the middle name on the list

Shadowing Suggestions

It is not necessary that teachers know details of the observation. They should realize, however, that you are not observing them. Hopefully, the student will not recognize the coincidence of your presence in his every class. If he does "figure out" that you may be following him, handle it as seems best to you. At the end of the day, you will conduct a brief interview with the student. If February 17th is a special day with assemblies, field trips, etc., observe your student anyway. In the event of snow, go on the 18th.

Again, a strong thanks for helping with the study. Feel free to recruit a friend to do an additional study in your area. It is a great experience.

SHADOW STUDY DIRECTIONS

1. Make additional copies of the attached shadow study form for your use— 5 or 6 sheets are probably needed.
2. Number each page consecutively.
3. Record events *every ten minutes* but always begin anew at the start of each period.
4. Interview your student at the end of the day (if at all possible), asking him these basic questions:
    a) What would you tell a new friend about your school?
    b) If you could change anything about your school, what would it be and how would you change it?
5. Complete the general information form as possible from available records.
6. It would be very helpful if you summarized your reactions to the Shadow Study day in a way to stress what was happening to the student and how he was reacting to these events. Please prepare this summary separately from the Shadow Study sheets.
7. Please return three typed (xeroxed) copies of the Shadow Study.

SHADOW STUDY

DATE ______________________ OBSERVER ______________________

DIRECTIONS: Every *ten minutes* record the happenings in the appropriate column. Identify only the subject being taught, student behavior, and classroom environment (you may wish to include sample teacher or student talk in the last two columns.)

Time/Location	Student Behavior	Environment
Example: 8:40 - Homeroom	George is listening to the Student Government report given by a student - seems interested.	A typical classroom, chairs in rows. Teacher standing at side during report.

FORM SENT
TO OBSERVER

D LIST OF SCHOOLS

Brookhaven Middle School, Decatur, Alabama
Annie Camp Middle School, Jonesboro, Arkansas
Camden Middle School, Camden, Arkansas
Douglas MacArthur Middle School, Jonesboro, Arkansas
Brentwood Middle School, Greeley, Colorado
Evergreen Open Living School, Evergreen, Colorado
Laredo Middle School, Denver, Colorado
Louisville Middle School, Louisville, Colorado
Minturn Middle School, Minturn, Colorado
North Middle School, Aurora, Colorado
St. Mary's Academy Middle School, Englewood, Colorado
Christine Cruse, Stamford, Connecticut
Central Middle School, Dover, Delaware
Christiana Middle School, Newark, Delaware
William Henry Middle School, Dover, Delaware
Elizabeth Cobb Middle School, Tallahassee, Florida
Fort Myers Middle School, Fort Myers, Florida
Lincoln Middle School, Gainesville, Florida
Plantation Middle, Plantation, Florida
Riviera Middle, St. Petersburg, Florida
Burney Harris Middle School, Athens, Georgia
Davis Middle School, Milledgeville, Georgia
Dodgen Middle School, Marietta, Georgia
Griffin Middle School, Smryna, Georgia
Jane Macon Middle School, Brunswick, Georgia
Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School, Atlanta, Georgia
Sandy Springs Middle School, Sandy Springs, Georgia
Savannah Country Day School, Savannah, Georgia
Sweetwater Middle School, Lawrenceville, Georgia
Valley Point Middle, Dalton, Georgia
West Side Middle School, Rocky Face, Georgia
Centralia Junior High School, Mt. Vernon, Illinois
John F. Kennedy, Rockford, Illinois
Central Catholic Middle School, Indianapolis, Indiana
Columbia Middle School, Logansport, Indiana
Custer Baker Middle School, Franklin, Indiana
Heritage Middle School, Middlebury, Indiana
Westchester Middle School, Chesterton, Indiana
West Vigo Middle School, West Terre Haute, Indiana

Edison Middle School, Waterloo, Iowa
Paola Middle School, Ottawa, Kansas
Hardin Central, Ceilia, Kentucky
Southside Middle, Paris, Kentucky
Matthew Henson Middle School, Indian Head, Maryland
Berrien Springs Middle School, Berrien Springs, Michigan
Coleman Middle School, Coleman, Michigan
Lakeview Community Schools, Lakeview, Michigan
Meridian Junior High School, Sanford, Michigan
Plainwell Middle School, Plainwell, Michigan
Remus Robinson Middle School, Detroit, Michigan
Franklin Middle School, Mankato, Minnesota
Rosemount Middle School, Rosemount, Minnesota
Valley Middle School, Apple Valley, Minnesota
Leland Middle School, Leland, Mississippi
The Middle School, Amory, Mississippi
Brittany Middle School, University City, Missouri
Nipher Middle School, Kirkwood, Missouri
Mastricola Middle School, Merrimack, New Hampshire
John Adams Middle School, Albuquerque, New Mexico
A. V. Zogg Middle School, Liverpool, New York
Casey Middle School, East Amherst, New York
Glen Cove Middle School, Glen Cove, New York
Heim Middle School, Williamsville, New York
Mill Middle School, Williamsville, New York
Pine Grove Middle, East Syracuse, New York
Pioneer Middle Central, Yorkshire, New York
Ayden Grammar School, Ayden, North Carolina
Candor Middle School, Candor, North Carolina
Harry M. Arndt, Hickory, North Carolina
Johnson School, Troy, North Carolina
Lenoir Middle School, Lenoir, North Carolina
Troy Junior High, Troy, North Carolina
Washington Park School, Laurinburg, North Carolina
Kimpton Middle School, Munroe Falls, Ohio
Manchester Middle School, Akron, Ohio
Stewart Jr. High School, Oxford, Ohio
Turpin Middle School, Cincinnati, Ohio
Willis Intermediate School, Delaware, Ohio
Worthingway Middle School, Worthington, Ohio
Carver Middle School, Tulsa, Oklahoma
Aliquippa Middle School, Aliquippa, Pennsylvania
Neil Armstrong Middle School, Bethel Park, Pennsylvania
Reizenstein Middle School, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Slippery Rock Area Middle School, Slippery Rock, Pennsylvania
Berea Middle School, Greenville, South Carolina

Vermillion Middle School, Vermillion, South Dakota
Greeneville Middle School, Greeneville, Tennessee
Judson Middle School, Longview, Texas
Killough Middle School, Houston, Texas
Hedgesville Middle School, Hedgesville, West Virginia
Martinsburg South Middle School, Martinsburg, West Virginia
North Middle School, Martinsburg, West Virginia
Lovell Middle School, Lovell, Wyoming

E LIST OF OBSERVERS

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